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*The Autobiography of
General Sir O'Moore Creagh,
V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.*



GENERAL SIR O'M. CREAGH, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

[*Frontispiece.*]

**THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
GENERAL SIR O'MOORE
CREAGH, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.**

*With an Introduction and Notes by Major-
General Sir Charles E. Callwell, K.C.B. ::*

WITH 16 ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

THE compilation of this Autobiography had, at the time of Sir O'Moore Creagh's death in 1923, been occupying much of his spare time for some years. The intention was to carry the work only up to the date of his finally quitting India after forty-eight years' service.

The MS. had been completed, but part of it still awaited final revision at the author's hands. The fact, however, that portions of the work as originally written had been withdrawn and had been published as a separate volume entitled "Indian Studies," left the remainder in some confusion. The passages thus cut out dealt with Indian history, ethnography, religions and mythology, as well as with the life of the people of India and with various problems of policy and of military and civil administration. Matter concerned with these subjects, moreover, still remained, and as the retention of the whole of this would have rendered the Autobiography inconveniently bulky, some pruning has been effected. A rearrangement of certain of the chapters has consequently been necessitated, and Tables of Contents of the chapters, as well as a few footnotes, have been added.

The correct spelling to employ when transcribing Oriental nomenclature into the English character presents some difficulty and admits of differences of opinion. Sir O'Moore Creagh possessed a very thorough knowledge of most of the dialects in use in northern and western India, but, as he had not finally revised the MS., the orthography appearing in it as it stood was not always quite consistent. In preparing the work for press, the spelling which he apparently favoured has been followed in each case.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—ORIGIN AND EARLY YEARS IN IRELAND	I
II.—THE SANDHURST OF THE 'SIXTIES	17
III.—SERVICE AT THE REGIMENTAL DEPOT	25
IV.—FROM PORTSMOUTH TO DEOLALI	40
V.—A STAY AT DEOLALI	51
VI.—JOINING REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS AT MHOW . .	60
VII.—EARLY DAYS IN THE INDIAN ARMY	76
VIII.—WITH THE DEOLI IRREGULAR FORCE	88
IX.—SOME NOTES ON RAJPUTANA AND THE MERWARAS .	107
X.—WITH THE MERWARA BATTALION IN RAJPUTANA .	118
XI.—WITH THE MERWARA BATTALION IN RAJPUTANA— <i>con.</i>	126
XII.—THE AFGHAN WAR OF 1878–80: FIRST PHASE .	137
XIII.—THE AFGHAN WAR OF 1878–80: SECOND PHASE .	155
XIV.—BACK IN RAJPUTANA	167
XV.—IN COMMAND OF THE 2ND BALUCHIS	180
XVI.—ON THE STAFF AT POONA	195
XVII.—IN COMMAND AT ADEN	207
XVIII.—THE NORTH CHINA FIELD FORCE	220
XIX.—EXPERIENCES WITH THE CHINESE	233
XX.—DIVISIONAL COMMANDER	241
XXI.—AT THE INDIA OFFICE	250
XXII.—COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA: EARLY EXPERIENCES	259
XXIII.—COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1911	271
XXIV.—COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1912	280
XXV.—COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1913–14	292

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

General Sir O'Moore Creagh, V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.	. <i>Frontispiece</i>
Ensign O'M. Creagh, 1866	. <i>Facing p. 26</i>
H.M.S. <i>Malabar</i>	" 40
The Taj Mahal	" 89
In the Khaibar below Ali Masjid, 1879	" 142
Maharaja Siwai Mangal Singh of Alwar	" 172
Native Officers of the 2nd Baluchis	" 182
Sultan Ahmed Fadthl of Lahej	" 218
The Allied Generals at Tientsin	" 224
Lieut.-Colonel Marchand	" 230
H.E. Yuan-shi-kai and A.D.C.s	" 236
General Creagh, the Chinese Brigadier and Major Win- gate at the Emperor's Tomb	" 238
The Amir of Afghanistan at Rawal Pindi	" 248
The C.-in-C.'s Guests at the Durbar	" 277
The C.-in-C. and Lady Creagh in the Delhi Procession	" 290
The C.-in-C. and his Personal Staff	" 302

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF GENERAL SIR O'MOORE CREAGH

V.C., G.C.B., G.C.S.I.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND EARLY YEARS IN IRELAND

The Creaghs of Clare.—Their record as soldiers of fortune.—James Creagh of Cahirbane.—His sons.—A cousin of his at Pondicherry.—My father, Captain Creagh, R.N., of Cahirbane.—His services in 1812 and at Algiers.—His marriage to the daughter of The O'Moore of Cloghan Castle.—Rory O'Moore.—My brothers' record.—Cahirbane.—Early days at the old home.—Virtues of whisky as a universal panacea.—A gallant cousin.—My mother.—Education.—Dancing lessons.—A queer superintendent of studies.—Running wild but acquiring useful knowledge and experience.—Old Irish ways; the "Big House"; "Himself" and "Herself."—Domestic servants.—A resented innovation.—A confidential butler.—Bloated establishments.—Early marriages amongst the peasantry.—The subdivision of farms.—Pleasures of the rural population.—Why a forge was always held in veneration.—Sports and wakes.—Faction fights.—Gaelic.—The virtues of linguistic attainments.—The "Shanachies."—Influence of their songs and stories.—Banshees.—Peasants' cabins and mode of life.—Emigration.—My father and his people.—Death of my father.—We go to live in France.—A brief return to Cahirbane.—Good-bye to the old place.

I JOINED the army in 1866, served in it for the exceptionally long period of forty-eight years and six months without ever during that time having been unemployed, held many high appointments mostly abroad, took part in events of public importance, observed others at close quarters, and met numerous celebrities. I believe—perhaps too readily—that an account of incidents and of individuals as they appeared to me at the time, and expressions of opinion based upon actual knowledge gained on the spot, may prove both useful and interesting to some. For this reason I publish my Memoirs. The only merit I can claim for them is accuracy.

My family is of the Irish-Gaelic race. It has been long represented amongst the landed gentry of my native county of Clare, and, like all such Irish-Gaelic families, it has a large

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

admixture of Anglo-Norman and Anglo-Saxon blood derived from the female side. Its traditions are military, none of my ancestors ever having adopted any other profession than that of arms. During the civil wars that prevailed in Ireland in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Creaghs adhered to the Roman Catholic church, and many—exiled as a consequence from their native land—took service in the armies of Spain, France and Austria. Irish soldiers of fortune who thus served in foreign lands were termed “ wild geese ” by their friends at home, who thought that like birds of passage the wanderers would return in due season. But the majority of them found a last resting-place on the numerous battle-fields that lie scattered across the face of the Continent from the Low Countries to Belgrade, and the story of their valour is to be found hidden away in the archives of the War Ministries of the nations which they served so well.

Several of them, however, gained high honour and founded noble families in the countries of their adoption, where their descendants still flourish. Some few, on the other hand, returned to Ireland, and amongst these was my ancestor who—an officer in the French Army—inherited the family estates in County Clare at the end of the seventeenth century and subsequently lived peacefully in his native land. His son, to avoid the effects of the penal laws against Roman Catholic landowners, conformed to the Church of England, and since doing so his descendants have served in the military forces of their country ; but other branches of the family, still extant in Ireland, adhered to the Roman Catholic faith. My grandfather, James Creagh of Cahirbane, who held other estates in County Clare and in County Limerick, was born in 1753. He served for a short time in the 67th Regiment of Foot, but at an early age he succeeded to the family property on his father's death, resigned his commission, married his cousin and neighbour, Miss Vandeleur of Ralahine, lived the life of a country gentleman, and died at the age of ninety-two leaving five sons and nine daughters. His sons, my father excepted, served in the Army, the three eldest in the Cavalry and the youngest in the Infantry. They all fought in the wars of their time, and two, who served in India under Lord Lake, took part in the Battle of Laswarri which resulted in the destruction of Holkar's power.

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

The only previous connection my family had with that country, in which I was destined to pass so many years of my life, was through a cousin of my grandfather's, an officer of the French Army, who served in India under Count Lally. When that General surrendered to Colonel (afterwards General Sir Eyre) Coote at Pondicherri in 1760, no less than five Creaghs were among the prisoners. It is a somewhat remarkable fact that Colonel Coote was an Irishman and that Count Lally also was of Irish descent, for the latter's family was founded in France by a "wild goose" of the O'Lallys of Tulloch-na-daly in the county of Galway, a family which I believe is long since extinct.

My father, the first of the Creaghs of Cahirbane to take to a sea life, entered the Royal Navy at the age of eleven with the support of Captain (afterwards Admiral Sir Peter) Parker, a friend of my grandfather's. He was engaged on blockade duty on the French coast during the latter part of the Napoleonic Wars, and he was serving in the West Indies when the war with the United States broke out in 1812. He distinguished himself during that campaign in a gunboat action against superior forces; the British fleet was at the time lying becalmed at some distance from land, and he had been sent in command of a tender to procure water ashore. When near the coast he was attacked by two American gunboats carrying heavier guns and larger crews than the tender. His boat could receive no help from the fleet and the choice lay between fighting and surrender. He decided on the former and resisted till his boat was sunk. He was rescued and was interned at New York for the remainder of the struggle, receiving the commendation of the Admiralty for his gallantry. I have often heard him express his gratitude for the kindness with which he was treated by his captors, and especially by the family of the American Commodore, during the time that he was a prisoner of war.

His last active service was at the attack on Algiers in 1816, when he was severely wounded and became incapacitated for further active service. He was appointed to the coast-guard in Ireland on his recovery, and he then married my mother, who was a daughter of The O'Moore of Cloghan Castle in King's County and a lineal descendant of the last independent chief of his clan, the celebrated Ruaidhri (pronounced Rory) or Roderick

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

O'Moore, whose valour was long a theme of Gaelic song and story. Rory O'Moore was one of the most active and able of the Irish confederate chiefs who raised the standard of revolt in 1561. On the suppression of the rebellion the other chiefs who were concerned in the rising fled to Spain, but Rory refused to do so, remained in his native land, and fought his enemies gallantly till he fell sword in hand. He died for his country, and his finest epitaph is to be found in the songs and stories handed down by his people. His descendants, like many of the Creaghs, conformed to the Church of England and served in the military forces of their country.

My father inherited the entailed estates of the family on my grandfather's death, his elder brothers having died and left no issue. He thereupon retired from the Royal Navy, in which he had attained the rank of Post-Captain, and took up his residence at Cahirbane. The services of his sons to the Empire are typical of those of most of our class in the south and west of Ireland, and may not unfittingly be recorded here :

My eldest brother served in the Crimean War and in India during the Mutiny. After seventeen years passed in the 1st Royals (now the Royal Scots) he retired as a Captain, and he died without issue.

My second brother joined the Punjab Police some years after being plucked for the Royal Navy. Shortly afterwards the experiment was made of employing Sikhs in the Hong-Kong Police, and he was selected to recruit, train and command the first batch ; he accompanied them to Hong-Kong and on arrival there was transferred to the Colonial Civil Service. When on leave to this country one time he was called to the English Bar, and he subsequently filled many important posts in the Far East, finishing up as Governor of Labuan and British North Borneo. He retired with a C.M.G. about fifteen years ago and died in 1918, leaving two sons. The elder of these, now a Commander R.N., was awarded the D.S.O. for services during the World War ; the younger, who joined the Royal Artillery, was killed in France.

My third brother served for many years in the Royal Indian Marine, during which he was twice thanked by the Government for skilful seamanship and for gallantry in saving life at sea. He retired as a Commander, and he afterwards lived on his

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

property in Clare, of which he was a D.L. and J.P., and he served as High Sheriff. He died some eight years ago without issue.

I am the fourth, and have an only son in the 7th Hussars, who served through the World War in France and received the M.C.

My fifth brother entered the Royal Navy and attained the rank of Lieutenant. Believing his prospects of promotion to be small in consequence of the reduction of the Royal Navy in 1879, he retired and was appointed to the Chinese Imperial Custom Service by its chief, the late Sir Robert Hart. He resigned after several years' service and died without issue before the outbreak of the World War.

My sixth brother entered the Royal Navy and was a Lieutenant on board H.M.S. *Dotterel* when that vessel was destroyed in the Straits of Magellan by an explosion in the magazine and he was killed, dying unmarried.

My seventh brother entered the Army, in which he had attained the rank of Captain, when he contracted yellow fever while on duty in British Honduras, which proved fatal. He left no male issue.

After settling down at Cahirbane my father lived for the rest of his days the ordinary life of an Irish county gentleman, although he was precluded from hunting by the effects of his wound, in spite of his owning horses and maintaining a good stable. Cahirbane was a straggling manor house, consisting of two detached, double-storied blocks of buildings which were connected by a double-storied corridor. The stables, coach-houses and farm buildings were on the right of the house, surrounded by a high wall enclosing a farm-yard. The whole of the buildings were constructed of thick blocks of enduring stone, cemented together by mortar with which bullocks' hair was mixed; the architect had taken all possible precautions to render his work immune from the assaults of time. In front of the house there were extensive lawns and paddocks beautified by noble trees; while on its left there were shrubberies and a large flower, fruit and kitchen garden. Overlooking the whole is an eminence crowned by a prehistoric rath or circular earth-work fortress, covered with larch trees, regarding which the shanachies (successors of the ancient bards) related many legends of sieges of ancient days which I delighted to hear.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

The domain in which the house stands was farmed by my father and consisted of about two hundred and fifty Irish acres of good land, about two miles from the estuary of the river Shannon, and streams flowed through it into the great river, which here is tidal and several miles wide. They abounded in fish and wild fowl, while wild duck bred on their banks. There was splendid fishing and shooting almost outside the door; in hard winters I have killed snipe in the farm-yard. There was a pack of harriers close by, and one of the best packs of fox-hounds in Ireland was kennelled twelve miles away in the county of Limerick. It was a glorious country to live in in those days; it abounded in country seats, mostly inhabited by our relatives, and there was plenty of society. A neighbouring country gentleman, on his death-bed when nearly eighty years old, was consolingly told by the parson that he was going to a better land, but replied doubtfully: "I have lived, man and boy, for over seventy years in Balnagarde and it takes a lot of bating" (beating).

One block of my old home was reserved for the children and servants. It contained the schoolroom, nursery, servants' hall, kitchen and scullery. The rest of the house was occupied by the grown-up members of the family and contained the drawing-room, dining-room, library, music-room and sitting-rooms, where children were not allowed; they were kept under more severe discipline than is usual now.

I was born at Cahirbane in April, 1848, the eighth child of a family of nine sons and two daughters (one of my brothers died before I was born and one sister when I was too young to recall her), and three of my brothers were younger than I. In my childhood I saw little of my eldest brother, who was at school till he went to the Royal Military College, and in 1854 got his commission in the 1st Royals, then at the seat of war in the Crimea. He came home for a short leave before joining and I well recollect his departure and how I envied him. During his short stay at home he practised sword exercise daily before an admiring audience of grooms, stable boys and other hangers-on, then extremely numerous in our house. A broomstick was set up in the farm-yard for him to practise on, and when he made a good cut he was greeted by approving shouts of "Arrah, look boys! 'tis himself will clip off the heads of the Roosians in fine style."

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

We younger children regarded our father with the greatest awe ; we were only allowed into his presence on state occasions such as dinner-parties, when we were dressed up in our best clothes, solemnly marched into the dining-room during dessert, presented to the guests and to our father, who gave us each a wine-glass of whisky-punch and some sweets. After swallowing them we withdrew with equal solemnity, which was only abandoned when we got outside the dining-room door and fell on the good things in the still-room, fighting for them, as the old butler used to say, " like a pack of fox-hounds."

Whisky was the universal panacea for all the ills of life. When we children suffered from an inward pain we were given a lump of sugar soaked in it. After our hair was cut our heads were well rubbed with it as a prophylactic against cold. We were very wild and shy in the company of strangers and found not a little difficulty in comporting ourselves correctly when taken into society. Our child visitors, always relegated to the schoolroom, found the ordeal as trying as we did. I recollect a young cousin being quite overcome by shyness when he was brought into the dining-room. He bolted under the table, whence all blandishments failed to extract him. He, doubtless after considering things, found himself bound to give some expression to his feelings, for, finding himself unnoticed, he stuck his head out near where his mother sat, exclaiming : " Mother, I wish I was a good hound," then withdrew it and resumed his position until he was enabled to retreat, camouflaged by the withdrawal of the ladies. He grew up a good sportsman and fine soldier and was killed on the North-West Frontier of India in his first action, fighting valiantly. Had the rule permitting the post-mortem award of the Victoria Cross been then in force, it would certainly have been given to his family.

Our schoolroom was a merry one. My dear mother made its care her special business, for her children were her greatest joy. We loved her and her will was our law as long as she lived. She died over thirty-five years ago, aged about eighty-four. In her youth she had been very beautiful ; she had a clear pink and white complexion, jet black hair, Irish blue-violet eyes and a perfect figure. She rode straight to hounds, and was an accomplished musician with a charming voice, singing Irish ballads with exquisite feeling and accompanying herself on the harp or

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

guitar. She was very popular, especially among my father's tenantry, who called her "The Lily of Lasma," the name of the barony in which Cloghan Castle is situated. She often sang and played in our schoolroom, and on such occasions the servants and hangers-on used to be admitted, much to their delight.

Our system of education in early youth was admirably adapted to the requirements of the profession of arms for which we were destined from our birth. To even think of adopting any other, of which we were never guilty, would have been regarded as unworthy of the family traditions. Our tutor was the son of a neighbouring farmer, who, not being a man of "quality," treated us with the greatest respect; he was well educated in classical and Irish lore and in mathematics. A dancing master appeared periodically, attended by his son (an ex-sergeant of artillery) as fiddler. Their visits lasted about three weeks at a time. The method of teaching us jig-steps was peculiar. The dancing master tied a straw rope, called in Irish, "sugan," round one leg of a pupil, and a withy (ordinarily used to bind the twigs of a broom together, and called in Irish a "gad") round the pupil's other leg. The fiddler would then strike up a tune and his father would shout directions for our movements in a stentorian voice: "Rise upon sugan, sink upon gad." "Gad, gad, sugan, gad," and so on. The dancing master used to get excited, and so did his son, and the longer the step-drill lasted the quicker was played the tune and the more violent became the exercise. There was generally an audience who joined in, and the fun then became fast and furious.

An old ex-Captain, a sort of Dugald Dalgety, who had served in two or three South American armies, occupied the honorary position of superintendent of studies. He was a clever, well-educated man, who knew French and Latin perfectly, and spoke them with the strongest Irish brogue that I have ever heard, and he was deeply read in ancient and in modern history. He used to tell us vivid stories of his campaigns, and he used to end up by remarking that the passions and the mental qualities of the races of mankind are little changed by time, and that they produce very similar effects from age to age, so that the political problems which arise are much the same at all periods of the world's history. We loved to listen to him, and subsequent experiences have convinced me that his views on human

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

psychology were correct. From time to time he reported progress to our father, and he pronounced us to be clever—on what grounds I do not know, and I do not think that he knew himself.

The tutor, however, we voted a bore and we absented ourselves from our studies when we thought fit ; nor were we ever called to account for it. We ran wild among the peasantry, camping out in the bogs and woods, snaring birds, catching fish and poaching. Our peasant companions filled our heads with legends and stories of the ancient glories of our race, which we firmly believed and so became filled with racial pride. We often went about bare-footed and, like wild things, were perfectly happy. Visitors, such as our attorney or as some steward from an outlying farm, occasionally arrived, whose social position was too high for the servants' hall but was not high enough for admission amongst the quality, and such people were entertained in the school-room. They, their peculiarities and their stories always interested us ; our sense of hospitality compelled us to treat them with attention ; and this further interfered with our studies. I learnt little in early life from books, but learnt much from nature and from association with all sorts and conditions of men. This taught me sympathy with the wants, failings and aspirations of others. I moreover developed a good constitution, which has stood me in good stead in the bad climates in which my lot was sometimes to be cast.

It is interesting, to-day when they have disappeared, to recall some of the time-honoured customs which prevailed in my native county in the middle of last century. In those days the peasantry revered the ancient county families, most of which have since that time left the country. The peasantry called a country gentleman's residence the " Big House," and they always alluded to its owner and to his wife as " Himself " and " Herself." It was the usual custom for certain of the families of the tenants to provide the domestic servants for the Big House, and also the artisans for the estate and the labourers needed for the home farm—as they had been doing for generations. When one of these retainers became old and feeble, he or she was allowed to introduce a young relative as assistant or, when ill, as a substitute. No retainer was ever sent adrift.

The domestic servants looked upon themselves almost as relatives of the owner of the Big House and of the family which

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

they served, with which they always maintained a friendly, if respectful, intimacy. They regarded its honour as their own, and there was nothing that they would not do to uphold it. They at the same time assumed a right, which was not often disputed, to have a "say" in matters affecting the general welfare, and they passively resisted all innovations; for innovations of all kinds they hated. Our old home, for instance, possessed no bath-room, so baths if required had to be carried up to the bedrooms. We children got these when we could, but when they were not provided we, both in summer and in winter, resorted to a stream which ran close by the house. However, my eldest brother, after being for a time in England, insisted upon having a hip-bath in his bedroom *every morning*, and we all followed suit. This innovation our old butler strenuously resisted for a time; but eventually he gave way, remarking, "Troth, an ye must be dirty divils to want such a power of washing." The old man, who had filled the position for over fifty years, used to chip into the conversation when attending at dinner if he happened to be particularly interested in anything that was said either by "Himself" or by some guest.

As servants were seldom discharged, establishments were always far too large and included a number of hangers-on; but there was little employment elsewhere and wages were very low, which was not an unmixed evil. Although the servants were not lazy, their work was apt to be incomplete and in the Irish phrase "through other."

Marriages amongst the peasantry generally took place at a very early age; the bridegroom would usually be eighteen and the bride sixteen. This custom was encouraged by the priests. As these newly-married couples seldom possessed any means of subsistence individually, they had to be given a potato patch of about a couple of acres' extent by their parents; and as a result of this system farms had come from such continual subdivision to be too small to provide a living for their occupants. The servants of Big Houses were usually given a potato patch of somewhat larger dimensions by "Himself," together with a comparatively decent cottage; their mode of life was, in consequence, somewhat more civilized than that of other peasants, to whom they set a good example and one which was not without some effect.

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

But although the peasantry for the most part may be said to have existed almost in a state of semi-starvation, this did not affect their natural cheerfulness of disposition. Rustic entertainments were constantly in full swing and consisted of dances, donkey races and hurling matches on Sundays after Mass. The dances usually took place at cross-roads where there was a forge, the door of which was unhinged and used as a platform for jig-dancing. The music was provided by an itinerant fiddler or piper, who was paid a halfpenny each by dancers and the most affluent of the audience. The smith never objected ; no one touched his tools, for a forge was regarded with the greatest veneration, a veneration which originated, it was said, in the days of old and in the following manner :

King Conor passed a hurling match on his way to visit Cullan the mighty Smith of Ulster. The King observed the manly beauty and prowess of one of the young players and invited him into his service, but the youth was unwilling to leave his game and craved permission to join the royal suite later, and the King arrived at the dwelling of Cullan, where the party sat down to a banquet forgetting all about him. As night came on the dwelling was closed and Cullan, as was his custom, loosed a fierce and mighty hound of the old Irish breed to guard it. In a short time the assembled company heard a sound of strife without, and, rushing forth to see its cause, found the hound dead, strangled by the youth. They all acclaimed his strength and bravery except Cullan, who mourned the death of his faithful guardian. On seeing this the youth exclaimed : " Oh, Cullan, give me a whelp of the hound and I will train him to be as good as his sire. Till I do so you may sleep in safety, for I will guard your house with my good sword." The speech was received with approbation and the youth was afterwards known by the name of " Cu-Cullain " (The Hound of Cullan). He went on from one mighty deed to another, both in sport and war, and is renowned and revered to-day among all Irish-Gaels as the greatest hero of their race, and thenceforward a forge was respected on account of his association with Cullan.

For the donkey races " Himself " usually gave a prize of a collar and hames, or some other piece of harness. Hurling matches often ended in a free fight, which added to the day's enjoyment. On St. John's Day in June bonfires were lit on

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

certain hills ; the peasants assembled round them and engaged in sham fights armed with lighted sheaves of straw. On St. Stephen's Day the peasants hunted the wren, after which they assembled and held a sort of carnival at the Big House, when " Himself " gave them whisky to drink his health. St. Patrick's Day was one of merriment accompanied by much whisky drinking. When a few people met, the one who first said " My Patrick's pot on you " was entitled to a drink of whisky from the others.

There were also wakes, when much whisky and tobacco were consumed, and when old women mourned for the deceased with shrill cries, interrupted periodically by stories in praise of his virtues and those of his family. These old women were called *keeners*, from the Gaelic word *cuineadh*, which means mourning and is pronounced *keena*. Faction fights were of frequent occurrence ; the peasants all belonged to some warring faction or another ; the quarrels had usually originated in ancient days and the subject of dispute had long been forgotten. Rival factions met by appointment, usually on some race-course after the races were over, and engaged in combat with one another armed with sticks called *shillalaghs*. The fights often resulted in deaths and serious injuries, but the combatants, none the less on that account, enjoyed themselves vastly.

Gaelic was generally spoken by the peasantry in our remote corner of Clare at that time. But it became a dead language in later years until, in the early 'nineties, the ancient language was revived amongst some of the Anglo-Irish by one Douglas Hyde, whose name seems to indicate his race. As I was naturally quick at picking up dialects I spoke Gaelic as a child, but I have long since almost totally forgotten it. It may be recalled that the late Lord Wolseley, by way of encouraging officers' linguistic studies, told them that a facility in acquiring languages was a fool's accomplishment, and I sometimes wonder if he was right. Another Irishman, Lord Palmerston, when informed that somebody could speak six different foreign tongues fluently, remarked : " Has he ever said anything worth hearing in any one of them ? "

There were still left in Ireland in my early youth some of the class called *Scanachai* (*anglice* shanachie), meaning antiquary, who were successors to the bards of old. They have long since finally disappeared from the land, and the ancient legends and

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

the folk-lore of the Gaels have to a great extent disappeared with them ; but their songs and their stories inspired a copious literature written in English. The profession of shanachie was hereditary, and as these people were quite illiterate their lore was passed on verbally from father to son. They were very poor, and they wandered about ragged and bare-footed, being freely entertained both in the servants' hall of the Big House and in the peasants' cabins. Their songs and stories were rather of the Oriental type, songs and stories that sparkled with imagination of a far-fetched nature and that were usually in the last degree pathetic, treating of the deeds of devotion and the sufferings of the Irish-Gaelic race in the past. The peasants loved to listen to them, and as a child my pleasure in hearing them was equally great. But the shanachies inculcated an unwholesome race conceit and false ideas of chivalry, and they, in consequence, contributed in no small degree to bringing about the disturbed state of the country. This was especially the case when they held up land-owning families of recent origin, or families descended from sequestrators who had gained possession of confiscated estates, to contempt. They would point to a person of old race (even then a *rara avis* outside of a few remote spots) as the real owner of the land occupied by the "Saxon" owner, whose Big House nothing would induce a shanachie to visit.

The race conceit, the whimsical sentimentality and the extreme particularism which now prevail amongst the Irish peasantry are largely due to English literature inspired by the songs and the stories of the shanachies. To this, and to talk about "self-determination," the development of the present revolutionary and republican movement in Ireland may be traced. Napoleon said with great truth, "C'est l'imagination qui domine le monde." Nine-tenths of the inhabitants of Ireland nowadays are of English, Scotch or Welsh descent, and there is no "Irish Nation" distinct from the British nation.

The shanachies, it should be mentioned, related the legends that are attached to almost every ruined castle, and these castles were numerous, and also the legends attached to each rath and conspicuous hill. They knew, or affected to know, the pedigree of every ancient family in the countryside, and they would tell of the *ban-sigh* (pronounced banshee) or fairy-woman, whose cries announced the death of one of the family's members. They

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

would give the fairy's reason for attaching herself to a particular family, which generally concluded with: "They were a great people, some were hanged, some were transported, but they were never beaten, and always took revenge sooner or later." Holy wells abounded, and these the peasants were wont to visit when ill; bringing as offering some trifle—usually a bit of broken crockery or even an old rag—to the patron saint ensured a cure.

The peasants' cabins were too wretched to be dignified by the name of cottages. They were built of mud, and were so miserably thatched that many were not rainproof and consisted of one room only; the exit for the smoke from the fireplace was often merely a hole in the roof. Sanitary arrangements did not exist. The peasants had few blankets or bedsteads; they usually slept on straw spread on the earthen floor, and possessed nothing in the shape of furniture except a rough wooden table, a wooden bench or two, a dresser on which to lay their few pieces of crockery kept for ornament not use, and a large metal pot in which to boil the potatoes that, together with water, were their only diet for the greater part of the year. In summer milk or butter-milk was substituted for water, and mushrooms were added as a relish to the potatoes. Their only luxuries were newly-distilled whisky, called poteen—made in illicit stills—and tobacco of a very rank kind, which was sold at four shillings and eightpence a pound and burnt so slowly that a pipeful provided several smokes. On festive occasions, including wakes, the guests drank to excess, but the peasantry were not habitual drunkards.

Land was necessary to subsistence, and land-hunger raged. Many landlords let their lands to middlemen who sublet to the cultivators at an exorbitant rent. Happy was the peasant who owned a sow, which was fed chiefly on the skins of the potatoes left after the family meal; it shared the cabin with the family and it helped to pay the rent. The only relief from these miserable conditions was emigration; and it entailed severe hardships, for many of those who at this time quitted their native land knew only the Gaelic language, and these, especially the young women, suffered cruel adversity on arrival in a foreign country.

My father never had any trouble with his people, to whom he was always accessible and sympathetic, for he was liked and

Origin and Early Years in Ireland

respected by them because he was one of the ancient race. He understood them and he dealt with them in accordance with customs handed down from former times. This would have been resented had he not been one of "the old stock." He was most conservative, managed his estates himself, never tolerated the intervention of a middleman, and was a kind and considerate landlord who often forgot his rights but who never forgot the duties that he owed to his tenantry. Although on the Grand Jury and a Justice of the Peace, he was a law unto himself in dealing with his own people, and this greatly added to his popularity.

The failure of my second brother to pass for the Royal Navy was a great blow to him. It brought home to his mind the fact that the education of his sons required to be taken in hand more seriously than had hitherto been the case, and he decided to take the family over to France, where they would enjoy advantages that were not available in our remote part of Ireland. But on his way to the Continent his health broke down at Limerick, and he died after a short illness, leaving eight sons and one daughter. My eldest brother inherited the entailed estates, but the unentailed property was left to my mother. She in accordance with my father's wishes took us to France, where one of my brothers shortly afterwards died; my mother had his remains taken home to be laid to rest in the family vault in Quin Abbey near Ennis, where many generations of Creaghs lie buried. We remained in France for about three years, during which period two of my brothers joined their different professions; but then, my eldest brother having placed Cahirbane House and domain at my mother's disposal, she returned to the old home with my sister and two younger brothers, leaving me at school in England.

I used to spend my holidays with a cousin in the Royal Artillery who was quartered at Woolwich, but before long my mother experienced some difficulty in dealing with some of the tenants; I hated school and frequently wrote to her to say so, and, when I was about thirteen years of age, she, to my great joy, brought me back to Cahirbane to assist her. Thus, early in life, I learnt something about estate management under none too easy conditions; I at the same time resumed my life of freedom and old association, and spent most of my time hunting, shooting and fishing. My sister married at this time and my fifth

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

brother went to the *Britannia*, and when I was about fifteen my mother gave up Cahirbane and went to live in France. I was sent to Mr. Burney's private school at Gosport, which then had a high reputation for success in preparing youngsters for the Navy and the Army, but used to join my mother in France for the long vacations.

The day we quitted our old home was a sad one for us and for our old retainers and tenants. We felt that we would never again live in the place where we had been so happy—and so it proved. Subsequent legislation made us, like so many others of the landed gentry who were doing good work while they dwelt among their people, pensioners on our landed property—and what has Ireland gained thereby? I do not know. But I do know that the country lost the civilizing influence of a class which was respected by the vast majority of the Irish rural population, who depended upon it for employment and who hated those for whose benefit the old stock were expropriated. The disappearance of the landed gentry was a misfortune to the country from almost every point of view.

CHAPTER II

THE SANDHURST OF THE 'SIXTIES

Rules of entrance.—Establishment and length of course.—The treatment of the cadets and organization of the College.—An aged Commandant.—Maintenance of discipline.—Financial arrangements.—Strict code of honour.—“Johns.”—Accommodation.—Meals.—Hours.—Course of study.—Requirements to qualify for a commission.—Purchase and non-purchase commissions.—Professors’ trials.—Burners of the midnight oil.—Cribbing and the unwritten law with regard to it.—I pass the final.—The neglect of Indian history and Indian languages, and its unfortunate results.—Lack of adequate records of Indian mountain campaigns.—The fees at the College.—Creditable conduct of the cadets.—The inspection at the end of the term.—The Duke of Cambridge’s effective exhortation.

AT the date when I entered the Royal Military College, the age for admission was between seventeen and eighteen. The entrance examination was one of open competition; but it was very easy, as the qualification was low and there normally were more vacancies than competitors. I passed it when I was a little over seventeen, and I joined the College in July, 1865. The curriculum, on paper, was very much as it is to-day, but the passing-out test which qualified for a commission was much lower. The life of a cadet was less luxurious than is now the case. There were about two hundred and fifty cadets, and the ordinary course was one of two terms; but those who failed to qualify for a purchase commission (or in the competition for a non-purchase commission) at the examination held at the end of a cadet’s second term were allowed to put in a third in order to give them another chance.

Gentleman-cadets were treated very much like private soldiers. They were organized in three companies, each of which was under command of a captain seconded from the army, with a lieutenant as subaltern and three or four sergeants as drill instructors. It also had the following cadet-officers, viz., one responsible under-officer, four under-officers, four corporals and four lance-corporals, who performed the duties of company

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

non-commissioned officers. The Commandant of the College was an officer of the rank of colonel : the adjutant was a major. The Governor was a retired general officer of distinction. When I was there, the post was filled by General Sir Harry Jones ; he had fought in the Peninsular War and was a senile warrior who was almost deaf and blind ; he, however, took little part in the affairs of the College, the office being a sinecure given to an old officer as a reward for long and distinguished service.

The cadets were trained in company and battalion drill, in riding and in guard duties. In order to instruct them in these latter, a small guard used to be mounted at the grand entrance to the College during hours that did not interfere with drills and studies. Cadets were subject to the same minor punishments as those in force for private soldiers, viz., admonition, confinement to barracks (which carried pack-drill with it) for a maximum of twenty-eight days, confinement to cells up to a maximum of one hundred and sixty-eight hours, and deprivation of good-conduct badges. The first good-conduct badge was earned after two months' exemplary conduct, and two others after one month's exemplary conduct for each, dating from the award of the first.

Cadets were allowed half a crown a week as pocket-money, with an additional sixpence a week for each good-conduct badge. Responsible under-officers, under-officers and corporals got somewhat more. There was a College rule, a rule more honoured in the breach than in the observance, which forbade parents to make allowances to cadets in excess of their pocket-money, but as a matter of fact the majority of the cadets were privately provided with funds and had very much more money than was good for them. Some of the rich ones made a boast of being vicious in consequence, although few were so in reality ; but the example that they set was not good for comrades of weak character. A very strict code of honour was enforced both by the authorities and the cadets themselves, from which there were but few lapses—and such as occurred met with the condign punishment of summary expulsion, which disqualified the delinquent for a commission. Each cadet on joining was allotted a number and company (mine was B 74), which he was obliged to wear conspicuously on his uniform cap, so that those guilty of any offence

The Sandhurst of the 'Sixties

might be the more easily recognized. Such a rule was as derogatory as it was useless ; the cap, or its number, could be temporarily changed without any difficulty.

First-term cadets were called " Johns." Those in their second and third term were known as " old cadets." The accommodation varied slightly in each company. In B company (the others were A and C) four cadets were allotted to each room, viz., a corporal or lance-corporal in charge, and three gentleman-cadets, one of whom was a " John " and the room fag. The rough work of each room, cleaning boots, etc., was done by company soldier servants, but the fag did the light work. Cadets of each company lived apart, were in different studies and messed in different mess-rooms. The food was wholesome and plentiful but coarse ; those who required delicacies could buy them at the College " tuck-shop." At luncheon and dinner the cadets were provided, free of charge, with as much strong beer as they felt inclined to drink, but wine and spirits were prohibited. The College canteen, with an army pensioned sergeant in charge, was open from about three to nine daily except on Sundays. Only beer was sold in it ; but cadets were allowed to drink as much as they paid for ; such facilities for the supply of unlimited heady beer on the College premises was not conducive to the welfare of youths ; it was the strongest I ever tasted. Apart from the time they spent in study and on parade—about five or six hours daily, beginning at about 7 a.m.—cadets were allowed complete liberty ; but they had to be in their rooms at the " last post," which was sounded at about 9.30 p.m., and in bed when " lights out " sounded half an hour later.

The course of study was divided into two categories. One was obligatory and consisted of military history, including strategy and tactics, fortification, military surveying, simple mathematics and French or German ; I took up French, which I knew fluently before I joined, and I also was then well up in simple mathematics, so that I did not take any trouble over the study of either. The voluntary category consisted of chemistry, higher mathematics, and European languages other than French or German. It was necessary to qualify in all the obligatory subjects to pass the final examination. But the number of marks required to do so was very small and it was the more easy

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

to obtain them because the professors in charge of studies were permitted periodically during each term to award marks liberally for "progress made"; these were added to those gained at the final examination. About one hundred and twenty commissions in the Cavalry and Infantry were given each term, but the number of course depended on the vacancies in these arms. About ninety were purchase vacancies and the remainder non-purchase; of the latter, ten were given to King's, Queen's and Indian cadets, who were the sons of distinguished officers, and the remainder were apportioned to those who came out highest at the final examination. Only the competitors for non-purchase commissions as a rule took up voluntary subjects; without them they would have had little prospect of being high up enough on the list when passing out to prove successful.

The professors who were in charge of military studies were highly qualified officers of the army, and these always maintained strict discipline in their classes. Those in charge of non-military studies, on the other hand, were civilians, who were equally highly qualified educationally, but who were totally unable to maintain order amongst their pupils, for the cadets held them in little respect and spent most of the time in study in ragging one another and sometimes in ragging the professor; how the students, indeed, ever learnt anything at all with regard to the non-military subjects, I cannot imagine. Those of us who were competitors for non-purchase commissions were, however, of necessity industrious; they made a practice of sitting up after "lights out" and of working for hours on end outside the doors of their rooms by the light of an obscured tallow candle. This was prohibited by the regulations, so some frivolous cadet would occasionally give a twist to the handle of the door through which the orderly officer was in the habit of entering when making his night rounds. This would create a panic amongst the breakers of the rules, who would extinguish their bit of candle and flee pell-mell, books and all—like a lot of terrified rabbits bolting into their holes—to the great amusement of the other occupants of their rooms, who never tired of the joke.

Although it was in reality quite easy to qualify for a purchase commission there were a goodly number of cadets who were either too lazy or else too stupid to hope for success if they adhered to

The Sandhurst of the 'Sixties

legitimate methods. They therefore resorted to cribbing, which if detected involved summary dismissal from the College. A peculiar code of honour regarding cribbing (which was very strictly enforced) prevailed at Sandhurst in my day. The cadets regarded such practices as perfectly legitimate on the part of such of their number as merely wished to qualify for a purchase commission—or for a non-purchase commission in the case of King's, Queen's and Indian cadets—for in such cases the cribbing injured nobody. But, in the case of those who were competing for a non-purchase commission, it was strictly forbidden by the code, seeing that it gave an unfair advantage over rivals, and, in the event of the other cadets in the class becoming aware of a case of infringement of this rule, they were bound in honour to report the offender. To enable this code to be enforced, the rule was explained to "Johns" on their first joining, and they were required to inform the students in their classes whether it was, or was not, their intention to compete for a non-purchase commission. The dodges of the cribbers were so skilful that a professor could seldom detect what was going on without the assistance of the students, who knew perfectly well what the methods were that were employed. Cribbing was thus indulged in with impunity by a considerable proportion of the cadets, but only amongst those who proposed to purchase or who were on the specially nominated list. I never knew, or even heard of, a case where a cadet competing for a non-purchase commission employed unfair means.

I liked the military subjects and worked hard at them, and I knew French quite well enough to pass easily in that language ; I moreover was well enough up in the other obligatory subjects to qualify, and as I meant to purchase my commission I had no necessity for cribbing, which I moreover objected to on principle. I passed the final examination at the end of my second term quite easily. Like many of the other cadets who found it equally easy I did not even take the trouble to work out all the questions in the various examination papers, but handed my work in as soon as I had completed enough to ensure success.

Indian history and languages received no attention at all at Sandhurst. They were not even included in the syllabus of voluntary subjects. And yet a great part of the British Army served in India, while the junior officers for the Indian forces

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

were recruited from it. The young British officers who arrived at Bombay were, with a very few exceptions, totally ignorant of everything concerning the country and its people—which was most unfortunate. This state of affairs existed up to 1914; whether it does so still I cannot say. The education that officers undergo in their cadet-stage influences them considerably in later life, and ignoring the records of Indian wars, and especially of those mountain campaigns which are constantly taking place on the North-West Frontier, at the Royal Military College and at the Royal Military Academy is largely responsible for the general neglect of their study which prevails throughout the British Army. Not only are these campaigns of the utmost interest to the military student, but they illustrate by actual historical incidents almost every lesson that is set forth to-day in the official War Office book, "Field Service Regulations (Operations)." The North-West Frontier and its brave and restless people, moreover, constitute a real and ever-present problem for the Government of India, and one which increases in difficulty as time passes owing to the tribesmen from year to year becoming better armed. No Indian frontier policy can be effective without a judicial survey of it in its military and financial aspects. The reason why campaigns on the frontier are not studied as they ought to be probably is that such secrecy is preserved with regard to them. The only histories available are official accounts published by the Government of India.* In these the results are camouflaged so as to hide failures, to glorify successes, to show the tribesmen always as the aggressors, which is very far from the truth, and to escape reference to the cost.

The fees charged at the Royal Military College were inclusive and very moderate. For the sons of civilians they were at the rate of about £150 a year, and for sons of officers they varied between £60 and £120, according to rank. King's, Queen's and Indian cadets only paid such a portion of these sums as their parents or guardians could afford. As the son of a post-captain in the Royal Navy I paid £80.

When I look back on my time at Sandhurst and recollect the

* This was probably written a good many years ago. There are a fair number of privately written histories of such operations in existence, some of which are most instructive.

The Sandhurst of the 'Sixties

liberty accorded to a lot of high-spirited youths, suddenly released from the restraints of school life and treated as private soldiers, with the same temptations but amply provided with money to gratify them, I am astonished at the good conduct and the high sense of honour which prevailed amongst these aspirants for military glory. Except as regards cribbing, which the College authorities took no proper steps to put a stop to—as they might easily have done by appealing to the honour of the cadets—there were no serious misdemeanours.

During the last few days of each term the cadets were inspected on parade and in the riding school by some general officer of renown, and they occasionally marched to Aldershot to take part in a field day with the troops. At the end of my last term we were marched there and went through a field day held for the Duke of Teck, who had recently married the Princess Mary of Cambridge, and marched back after it was over. H.R.H. Field-Marshal the Duke of Cambridge, then Commander-in-Chief, took the inspection, after which he made a very breezy speech such as we cadets loved. He warned us against the use of strong language while giving vent to many big damns himself, which particularly fetched us, but he knew how to appeal to the spirit of chivalry inherent in such an audience. Both as a royal Duke and as Commander-in-Chief what he said made a deep impression. He told us, and similar addresses have been since frequently made by his successors to ours, that the future military honour of our Queen and Country would be largely in our hands, and in order to maintain it in its ancient glory, which we were in honour bound to do, it was incumbent on us to study the art of war diligently and to keep ourselves bodily and mentally fit. Only by doing so would we be enabled to maintain the glorious military traditions of which we were the heirs.

All of us were deeply impressed, and I am sure endeavoured in after-life to carry out His Royal Highness's precepts. I certainly did, and that I kept myself at least bodily fit is shown by my long service, by far the greater part of which has been passed in the vilest climates, yet I have neither suffered in health thereby, nor have I developed adipose tissue unduly. When I left the Royal Military College, aged eighteen years and three months, my height was five feet, nine and a half inches, my chest

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

measurement thirty-nine inches and my weight twelve stone, six pounds. My chest has increased by about an inch, but my weight is unaltered and I have developed no protuberance under the waistcoat.

CHAPTER III

SERVICE AT THE REGIMENTAL DEPOT

Purchase of outfit.—Leave before joining at Pembroke Dock.—The army at this time.—Soldiers and the civil population.—Periods of service, and the equipment and pay of the men.—Non-commissioned officers and men on, and off, the married establishment.—Conditions in which the families of the latter lived.—Promotion of non-commissioned officers to commissioned rank.—How officers in general obtained their commissions.—System of promotion in those days.—Mr. Cardwell and his great reforms.—The abolition of the purchase system.—Explanation of the purchase system.—How it worked in regard to promotion.—“Regulation” and “over-regulation.”—Cost of first commissions.—The spirit of caste that prevailed, and its evils.—Depots at the time when I joined.—Our senior officers at Pembroke Dock.—Parade movements as carried out.—Importance of *esprit de corps*.—Difficulty of getting rid of unsuitable officers.—Resort to ragging.—An example from Pembroke Dock.—The introduction of the “confidential reports” plan as a substitute for “ragging.”—Its merits so long as it is properly applied.—Costliness of regimental entertainments in those days.—Presentations of plate to the mess.—Junior officers more punctilious when dealing with seniors than is now the case.—Irishmen enlisted in the 95th.—My servant and his care of me.—A bottle of whisky proves irresistible.—Learning my duties.—My first court-martial.—An unusual incident in church.—Corporal punishment.—The ceremony of discharging a bad character “with ignominy.”—Difficulties of soldiers when discharged.—Accommodation at Pembroke Dock.—Sport.—Badger baiting.—My champion badger housed in the colonel’s car; a surprise for the colonel, who behaves very nicely under the circumstances.—Ordered out to India to join the 95th there.—Barrack furniture got rid of at a loss.—Farewells.—India quite unknown in this country before the Mutiny.—Macaulay and Mills unreliable.—Start with a draft for Portsmouth.—Billets.

WHEN the College broke up I went to London, and, feeling satisfied that I had qualified, lodged money for my commission and purchased my outfit as far as was practicable before knowing the regiment that I would be posted to. Officers in those days were provided with unfurnished quarters, and part of the outfit therefore consisted of barrack furniture. There were no official instructions on the subject, and outfitters persuaded inexperienced youngsters to buy much that was unnecessary. London hotels were then homely and their charges were moderate. I stayed at one in Piccadilly near where the “Ritz” now stands, which was much frequented by cadets;

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the charge for a good bedroom, with bath and breakfast, was only four shillings and sixpence, and a three-course dinner only cost half a crown.

When the result of the examination was published I was eighty-ninth on the list. I would not be gazetted for about three months, and would then be granted two months' leave before joining, so, as life in London has never been congenial to me, I went on a round of visits to friends, carrying a small library as companion—a custom I have followed ever since. I have been in the habit of acquainting myself with everything worthy of notice around me and drawing inferences therefrom. It is a most useful practice for a soldier as it trains the mind to be observant, to calculate rapidly, and to arrive quickly at correct decisions.

I was on a visit to an old friend and countryman, the Hon. W. H. Yelverton, of Whitland Abbey, Caermarthenshire, when, on the 2nd of October, 1866, I was gazetted to an ensigncy in the 95th Foot, now the 2nd Battalion Sherwood Foresters. The regiment was in India; I was on the expiration of the customary leave to join the depot at Pembroke Dock. Mr. Yelverton, a most charming and courtly old gentleman, wished me to stay with him till I joined, and his son (my greatest friend till he died some ten years ago) and I spent most of our time deep-sea fishing and yachting.

At the time when I joined the army as a commissioned officer it had changed but little from what it had been in the days of the Peninsular War. It was completely detached from the life of the nation, and it had scarcely been touched by the immense social advance that had taken place amongst the civil population during the previous fifty years. Soldiers were badly treated and were badly paid. They were illiterate as a rule, but no attempt was made to educate them nor to improve them either morally or socially. Discipline was maintained by a draconian code under which the rank and file performed their duties with the impassiveness that is born of iron restraint imposed on dull ignorance. The civil population regarded soldiers as the dregs of society, regardless of their superb valour; some few in the ranks were such, no doubt, but the great majority of the rank and file were not; their conduct was extraordinarily good. Sobriety was not in those days cultivated as a virtue throughout



ENSIGN O'M. CREAGH, 1866.

Service at the Regimental Depot

the nation, but while drunkenness was not regarded seriously in civil circles it entailed severe penalties in the case of the troops.

Soldiers were enlisted for a period of ten years, on the expiration of which men of "fair" character—which was very difficult to attain—were allowed to re-engage for a further period of eleven years, and almost all who were qualified did so. The pension of a private soldier after twenty-one years' service was eightpence a day with, in addition, the rate of good-conduct pay earned at the time of discharge; non-commissioned officers got more. The army was a long-service one, without reserves; the Yeomanry, Militia and Volunteers could not be looked upon as an effective reserve seeing that they were recruited only for service in the United Kingdom, while the Volunteers, but for a few units, were, moreover, quite untrained.

A private soldier was provided with uniform and boots at the cost of the State, but he had to pay for many articles of underclothing, and to make good at his own expense any clothing supplied by the State which had not lasted the prescribed period, so that he was almost always suffering deductions from his pay for this, and for barrack damages, extra food, etc. His pay was a shilling a day, supplemented by a penny a day for each good-conduct badge earned. When all deductions had been made, the balance of pay received by a private soldier was only a few pence per diem. Corporals got about double the pay of privates; sergeants got about three times that amount, and they had their own mess.

A small percentage of non-commissioned officers and men were allowed to marry, were "brought on the strength" of the regiment and had quarters assigned to them, but married private soldiers lived in squalor in these as the accommodation was quite inadequate. Many soldiers, however, married without permission, and their families were not officially recognized. In their case the soldier himself had to live and to mess in barracks, and the customary deductions were made from his scanty pay, on the balance of which his family existed in abject misery, mostly in slums outside barracks. When the unit moved from one station to another in the United Kingdom these wretched women and children could scarcely ever afford to follow it, and if it went abroad they were not allowed to do so. I can never forget the heart-rending scenes I have witnessed at the partings of wives

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

and children from husbands and fathers when regiments moved in those far-off days.

Non-commissioned officers rarely obtained combatant commissions, and even then only after many years' service, so that they had to starve on the pay of a junior officer. They therefore frequently refused promotion, but they gladly accepted non-combatant commissions as quartermaster or barrack-master, to which many illegal perquisites were attached by long custom, winked at by superiors. Such rankers could live in comfort, and they often saved considerable sums of money—sometimes to a certain extent at the cost of private soldiers.

Besides the mode of entry through Sandhurst and Woolwich, direct commissions were occasionally given by competitive examination in all arms of the service; but, in the case of the cavalry and infantry, the examination could be evaded by obtaining a transfer from the militia; and there were other loopholes through which youngsters crept in. Subsequent promotion was carried out by seniority, regardless of efficiency or ability, in all branches of the service, although in the cavalry and infantry seniority was, to a large extent, tempered by the purchase system. I believe that the reason why such evil methods of carrying out promotion nevertheless produced so many distinguished soldiers was that a career in the army was, to a great extent, hereditary in families, and that those who joined were, in general, accustomed to a healthy outdoor life. Still, as was inevitable under such a system, many inefficient men attained high rank and proved themselves failures in the field. The wonder is that their number was not greater.

It was between 1868 and 1874 that Mr. Cardwell, then Minister of War, introduced so many beneficent organic changes in military administration, acting under the advice of a few able soldiers, of whom Colonel (afterwards Field-Marshal Lord) Wolseley was one. The nation was at the time suffering from one of its periodical vehement fits of economy in all that relates to national defence, combined with gross extravagance in civil departments—they always seem to run in couples. Mr. Cardwell managed to effect far less than was necessary to make the army efficient, for at that time all Europe had come to be an armed camp, but he did all that was possible with the funds at his disposal. And perhaps the most beneficial change that

Service at the Regimental Depot

he effected, in spite of the most strenuous opposition, was the abolition of the purchase system. Politicians of to-day make themselves ridiculous by their claims to have won the Great War, but no one can refuse Mr. Cardwell the credit of having laid the foundation of the small regular army brought up to its fighting establishment by reserves, which at the outbreak of the struggle helped to check the initial German advance by its superb valour, and which by doing so gave the nation time to put its full strength into the field and eventually to win the war.

The purchase system has now been forgotten by most people, and I will therefore describe it briefly.

In purchase corps vacancies for first commissions as well as subsequent promotions (usually regimental) came under two categories, viz., "purchase" and "non-purchase," and they were dealt with on different lines. Purchase vacancies were created when an officer of any rank retired from the army by the sale of his commission, which, subject to the Sovereign's sanction, was permitted up to and inclusive of the rank of lieutenant-colonel. A purchase vacancy was filled by the senior in the next junior rank who was willing to pay for it. If no officer of that rank was prepared to pay, an officer of similar rank in another regiment was permitted to purchase the vacant step; but purchase over the heads of an intermediate rank was not permitted. For example, if a major sold his commission and there was no captain in the regiment who could purchase it, a lieutenant of the regiment was not permitted to do so; the step was offered to a captain of another regiment.

Non-purchase vacancies in purchase corps were caused by the promotion of a lieutenant-colonel to the rank of major-general (a lieutenant-colonel who accepted such promotion forfeited the right to sell his commission), and by the death of a lieutenant-colonel or officer of lower rank, either in action or otherwise. In these cases, non-purchase vacancies were filled by seniority just as they were in corps in which the purchase system did not prevail; but the officer promoted to fill a non-purchase vacancy had the right to sell his commission at its full value on the usual conditions, just as if he had purchased it.

First commissions to the cavalry and infantry were either bought to fill vacancies caused by the sale of commissions, or were given free to fill vacancies caused by promotion to major-

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

general or by death. Subsequent promotion was paid for in two sums, called respectively "regulation" and "over-regulation." The former was fixed by authority, and was larger in the cavalry than the infantry. Over-regulation was fixed by ancient custom and varied greatly in different regiments, but was also larger in the cavalry than the infantry. Over-regulation was tacitly recognized by authority and by public opinion in the army, which regarded its acceptance as a point of honour. It was not, however, a legal obligation, and an officer might refuse to pay it and might hold out for promotion at the regulation price only; but one who took up this position became extremely unpopular and was usually "ragged" out of his regiment. Ragging was, in those days, carried on with extreme violence and with complete impunity, so that cases of refusal to pay "over-regulation" were extremely rare. When such a thing occurred the officer who intended to sell his commission usually delayed doing so and so retarded promotion of his juniors. A first commission in the infantry cost £450; in the cavalry it ran to about £100 more, but I do not remember how much exactly. The average value of a cavalry lieutenant-colonelcy was about £13,000, that of one in the infantry was about £6,000. The value of intermediate commissions increased with the rank of each.

The spirit of caste, influenced as it was by regulations and especially by those which refused military titles to non-combatant officers, as also differences in respect to wealth and other causes, had deep roots in the army. This prevented the social amalgamation of all branches of the service, obstructed combined action, and fostered the art of making difficulties. Social relations exert great influence in tactical co-operation. Those who are social equals and who live on terms of equality work more harmoniously together at all times than do different castes. Without the closest union between all arms, harmonious co-operation and reciprocal tactical support must suffer. The Staff, Cavalry, Artillery, Infantry and Departmental Services were all castes apart, between which there was little social intercourse. Even now, although caste differences have practically disappeared, they are at work here and there.

When I joined as an ensign at Pembroke, the depots of regiments on foreign service consisted of two companies, com-

Service at the Regimental Depot

posed mostly of recruits, with a comparatively small number of trained soldiers who had come home for a short time before re-engaging or being discharged on pension. Captains, with one or two senior subalterns, were attached to each company. When recruit officers and men had completed their training they were drafted to their regiments, as might be required to bring these up to strength, but no one was allowed to remain at the depot for over two years.

The depot companies of about half a dozen regiments on foreign service were formed into depot battalions, quartered in various parts of the United Kingdom and numbered consecutively, that of Pembroke Dock being the 13th. Each depot battalion was commanded by a colonel and had a major as second in command, a captain as adjutant, a paymaster, quartermaster, and a chaplain. I do not know whether it was the same at others or not, but the colonel, major and adjutant of the 13th were all senile officers who wore the uniform of a past generation and who had the appearance of having come out of Noah's Ark. They were just able to mount their rosinantes and to ride slowly to parade ; when they got there the words of command they gave were as ancient as their uniforms. They spent considerable part of the time on parade in heated arguments carried on in a strong Irish brogue—for they all happened to be my countrymen—as to whose word of command was right and whose wrong, which afforded much amusement to everyone else.

But discipline was severe and throughout their controversies the faces of the officers and men in the ranks remained without a smile. Parade, however, nevertheless went well enough ; parade movements were then few and of a fixed type from which no deviation was permitted, so all ranks knew instinctively what was expected of them and acted accordingly regardless of such trivialities as wrong words of command. The few too stupid to do so were shoved rapidly and silently into their places by officers and sergeants in the supernumerary rank.

The colonel and his staff were most amiable old gentlemen who found no little difficulty in keeping order among the light-hearted young ensigns who formed by far the larger proportion of the officers. *Esprit de corps*, one of the most valuable military assets, is based on a code of unwritten law passed on from generation to generation which takes long to develop. This is commonly

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

forgotten when units of old standing are disbanded in the mistaken idea that they can be quickly reconstructed when necessary. *Esprit de corps* binds all ranks of a unit together in bonds of mutual respect and harmony, like a happy family all the members of which co-operate with one another and are jealous of the family honour. An officer who is ungentlemanly, vulgar, obstructive or deficient in tact is obviously a discordant element in such a community, and, if he does not reform after due warning, he should be removed from the army. There was then no means of getting rid of an officer unless he committed a definite offence of a serious nature which brought him under the penal clauses of the Military code, then called "The Mutiny Act and Articles of War." Therefore, when a subaltern was pernicious, the others usually dealt with him by ragging. He was in the first instance, gently ragged as a warning, and if he accepted it and profited by the lesson it was discontinued; if he did not reform it was carried on with ever-increasing energy, occasionally even with personal violence, and his life was made so uncomfortable that he was obliged eventually to resign his commission.

The final phase of a rag occurred shortly after I joined. A vulgar young ensign, a hopeless soaker but never drunk, was bound hand and foot by his fellow ensigns and they then deposited him on a ship's buoy in the middle of Milford Haven, where a very strong tide prevails which caused it to gyrate rapidly, first in one direction and then in another as the tide ebbed and flowed. He was rescued by a fisherman from his disagreeable and dangerous position, returned to barracks in a very dilapidated condition, and applied for permission to retire by the sale of his commission, which was granted. Ragging was carried on in accordance with the public opinion of the unit concerned, the senior officers of which considered the practice necessary in the interests of efficiency and excused it. A few years later the system of confidential reports was introduced, which took cognisance of all characteristics affecting military efficiency. When they came into force the Commander-in-Chief issued an Army Order to the effect that the higher the rank of an officer the greater the necessity for efficiency. His Royal Highness directed all commanding officers and heads of departments, from the highest to the lowest, to submit annually for his information confidential reports on all officers of whatever rank serving

Service at the Regimental Depot

under their immediate command, reports which in the interests of the army should be perfectly candid and without partiality, favour or affection. In accordance with them he would deal with each officer on his merits, and he strictly prohibited ragging.

Autres temps, autres mœurs. Ragging was useful in its day, but with the advent of confidential reports that day ended and it became harmful. Officers on whom the duty of making confidential reports fell were subsequently directed, on making adverse remarks, to read them verbatim to those on whom they reflected, and those whose conduct was impugned were permitted to make a written defence which was attached to the confidential report. If an unfit or undesirable officer has since been retained in the service it is because among reporting officers some weak-minded persons are found, as is inevitable when they are so numerous, who, rather than make a bad report make a colourless one and the benefit of the doubt caused thereby is given to the officer affected. I have rarely known a case in which an officer badly reported on has not deserved the adverse remarks made, and can only recall one such instance in my long military career.

When I joined, regimental life was much more expensive than it is now, mainly because regiments entertained much more lavishly; the outstanding function at a general's inspection was the "inspection dinner" at which the inspecting officer and his staff were regimental guests, while the senior officers of other corps in the station and also neighbouring persons of importance were invited to meet him; the officers of every regiment returned the hospitality they received from county people by entertaining them lavishly; they gave luncheon at race-meetings, two or three balls annually, and a dinner to the Yeomanry and Militia during their annual training. The expenses of entertainments were divided equally among all officers, regardless of rank. Besides the regulation donations and subscriptions, the amount of which varied according to rank, officers joining a regiment and on each subsequent promotion gave a piece of plate to the mess. Ensigns and cornets usually presented a silver cup, but officers of higher rank gave much more valuable articles. As this was an ancient custom most regiments had very large and valuable collections of plate. Ensigns mounting guard for the first time gave a drink, usually beer, to the non-commissioned

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

officers and men of the guard, as they did to the colour party the first time they carried either the Queen's or the regimental colour on parade, and many other ancient customs of a like nature prevailed, most of which no longer exist.

Officers on duty have always been most punctilious in matters of etiquette, but when off duty formality was much more strict than it is at present ; there was less familiarity between officers of different ranks ; junior officers were much more reserved in expressing opinions before seniors ; subalterns were not allowed to express any opinion until they had completed two years' service or made a voyage round the Cape. The mess was much more ceremonious than nowadays ; no one was permitted to leave the dinner-table until the customary toasts of " the Queen " and " the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family " had been honoured. Officers who drank wine after dinner were credited with one shilling and sixpence each in their wine account, defrayed from what was called " The Regent's Allowance," originally granted by King George IV., when Prince Regent, to enable poor officers to take a glass of wine free of cost.

Irishmen enlisted freely in those days ; there were several serving in the 95th both abroad and at the depot. I took one, a married man whose wife was on the strength, as my batman or soldier-servant ; he was a typical Irishman, a smart soldier who had served through the Indian Mutiny, and he proved both intelligent and faithful. He came from my own country, knew my family, took the utmost interest in me, and looked upon himself as personally responsible for my welfare. He always spoke of my belongings as " ours " and alluded to my requirements as what " we " wanted. If, when attending at mess, he thought that I was sitting too late at table he habitually whispered in a voice that could be heard distinctly by everybody : " It's time for you to be off and to go to bed, sir." The other ensigns used to call him my nurse.

I kept a bottle of whisky in my room, the contents of which often disappeared too rapidly, and I once determined to find out who drank it. So I feigned sleep one morning while he was dusting my room. The whisky bottle was on the table and he dusted it several times most carefully, looking at it lovingly the while. Finally he drew the cork and took a drink out of the bottle, whereupon I exclaimed, " You rascal, I have caught you.

Service at the Regimental Depot

If you wanted a drink you might at least have taken a glass." He, however, replied quite unconcernedly, "Sure, I didn't know that you slept with one eye open," and continued his work unabashed.

I soon settled down, got through the recruits' course of drill, musketry and military law, and was placed on duty as a trained officer except that I was not eligible for serving on courts-martial until I had completed a year's service. I thenceforward had nothing to do except to attend commanding officer's parade once a week, to take duty as orderly-officer about once in ten days, to pay my company daily, and to go to musketry camp for a fortnight annually. The rifle then in use was the Snider, firing a .577 expanding bullet. The use of such bullets was forbidden by international agreement some years later.

I well remember the first court-martial on which I sat as a member. It was held on an Irish soldier of my company who had come home to be discharged on pension. He had possessed five good-conduct badges when he arrived and, had he kept them for the short time that he was to be at the depot, he would have received a shilling and a penny a day for life. He was a smart soldier, who had served through the Crimean War and the Mutiny and was orderly to the chaplain, but the public houses of Pembroke Dock proved too much of an attraction. The first time that he was drunk he was admonished; but he soon repeated the offence, for which he was deprived of one good-conduct stripe. The chaplain begged the colonel to allow him to keep the man on, confident of inducing him to give up drink, but all to no purpose, and in a short time the old soldier had lost all his badges—the last in this wise :

One of his duties was to carry the chaplain's vestments, books, etc., to church on Sundays, which he frivolously called "portable piety." The chaplain was a short, narrow-chested, thin little man. His orderly was over six feet in height, broad-chested and well built. One Sunday morning when the troops were in church for parade service the chaplain did not appear at the appointed time. While everyone was wondering what had become of him his orderly staggered down the aisle very drunk, wearing the chaplain's vestments which reached only to his knees, brandishing a stick over his head and shouting: "See here, boys! fourpenny ale, be jabers! 'Twould make ye an

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Emperor of Rome!" The spectacle was intensely ludicrous and the congregation only refrained from unseemly laughter by a great effort; but the orderly was promptly seized, conveyed a prisoner to the guard-room, was in due course tried by court-martial, and was sentenced to lose his last good-conduct badge and to pass a week in the garrison cells.

The sentence might have been much more severe, for a soldier convicted of drunkenness four times off duty and twice on duty within three hundred and sixty-five days was considered a habitual drunkard and as such was liable to fifty lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails. It was a barbarously severe punishment, so much so that officers were very loth to inflict it, so flogging was rarely awarded and then only for offences of an infamous nature, which were extremely rare. I could never see a soldier flogged without being much affected, but I must say that the victims, actuated perhaps by a spirit of bravado, didn't seem to mind it in the least. I always thought it a punishment not only derogatory to the soldier himself but to the whole army as well, and I was glad when it was subsequently abolished. I also considered the ceremony that accompanied discharge with ignominy—although a punishment inflicted for disgraceful offences only—derogatory to the army. The culprit was brought by an escort to a full-dress parade of his unit; the facings and buttons of his uniform were cut off, a noose was then placed round his neck with a piece of rope attached, by which he was led by a small drummer-boy to the barrack gate, with the fife-and-drum band playing the "Rogue's March" behind him. On arrival there the drummer-boy gave him a kick behind and thus expelled him from the army.

Soldiers in those days were like big children; few of their "crimes" were serious; most of them would not be considered offences in civil life. When discharged after long years of severe restraint most of them felt lost. On his discharge the chaplain's orderly, referred to above, came weeping to bid me good-bye. "God help me! a poor orphan!" said he. "What'll become of me now?" I often heard the same fear expressed by other gallant old soldiers and was very sorry for them. There were no County or Old Comrades' Associations in those days.

The barracks at Pembroke Dock consisted of old Crimean huts perched on top of a hill overlooking Milford Haven. They

Service at the Regimental Depot

were dilapidated, extremely leaky and very cold in winter. The depot battalion provided detachments, consisting of a subaltern and a few men each, at about half a dozen forts which guarded the harbour and its entrance. They were dull spots, and the colonel used them as penal settlements to which he sent refractory young officers. The country was a sporting one, with two packs of foxhounds within a reasonable distance, good shooting and fishing abounded and Milford Haven provided a splendid sheet of water for yachting. The captain of my company, Norton Knatchbull, an officer who had fought through the Crimean War and the Mutiny with great distinction, was a capital sportsman, who rode straight to hounds, shot effectively with both gun and rifle, and was a fine fisherman and an athlete. He trained me in the way I should go and remained a respected friend until his death a short time ago.

Badger baiting was a favourite sport with many of the subalterns, myself included. My quarters were close to those of the colonel, and one day when I was having a badger-draw in front of my rooms there was much excitement and great noise. This annoyed the colonel and he issued orders that all badgers were to be removed from barracks forthwith. This was a sad blow to me as I owned the champion badger, and I feared that if the beast was boarded out he might be exchanged for an inferior one. But my servant, on being consulted, replied, "The colonel's old jaunting-car is in the coach-house close by; he never uses it, and the well of the car is the very place to put 'our' badger, for no one will go near the car for a week at any rate, and in the meantime I will make some other arrangement." But as ill-luck would have it, the colonel took it into his head to overhaul the old car the very next morning. He lifted the cover off the well, which the badger resented, making a violent snap at him and only just missing his hand. He was startled and much incensed, and, aware that I owned some bull terriers, at once concluded that the animal was mine. So he directed the adjutant to bring me before him at orderly-room to be "told off."

He had, however, recovered his usual good temper when I appeared, and he looked upon my behaviour more in sorrow at my audacity than in anger at what might have been the consequences. I apologized as best I could, making the excuse that I had not supposed that he would go near his jaunting-car until

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the badger had been removed. He had always been most kind to me, notwithstanding my numerous escapades, and he smiled at my explanation, merely remarking to the adjutant and the captain of my company, who formed the audience, that County Clare people—he was a native of County Cork—were wild and unreasonable, and that I wasn't to do it again.

I spent over two very happy years at Pembroke Dock. Although I could not afford to hunt regularly, I fished a little, and yachted and shot a great deal. On the expiration of my time at the depot I was ordered to join regimental headquarters in India during the trooping season of 1868-9, with a draft of one hundred men, among whom was my batman. When packing up my kit he suggested that "we" ought to sell "our" barrack furniture as it would be no use in India, being unsuitable for carriage by camel or by bullock-cart, the only available transport beyond railway termini. So I sold the stuff—for much less than I had given for it—and subsequently found that his advice had been quite sound. I passed my remaining time at home bidding good-bye to friends and to my mother who was on a visit to Whitland Abbey, where I spent Christmas.

India had been practically unknown to the British public up to the Mutiny of 1857. That cataclysm came like a bolt from the blue; I recollect the blank consternation caused by the news of the slaughter of British men, women and children. People in this country may almost have been said to have discovered India then, and their thirst for knowledge with regard to it called forth a flood of literature during the following ten years, which then ebbed, leaving behind only volumes like Macaulay's *Essays* and Mills' "*History of India*," works written by gifted men who possessed the faculty of composition but not the habit of verifying their statements. Those books convey to their readers the utterly unwarranted belief that our rule was founded on iniquity and oppression, whereas it was founded on freedom and justice and represents the most striking product of British valour and statesmanship in our history. I added Macaulay's *Essays* and Mills' work to my library and studied them on the voyage out and after my arrival, only to find, after acquiring a knowledge of the country, that they were totally unreliable.

A captain of the 95th, at home on leave, was put in command of the draft, but he had never served at the depot; I was the

Service at the Regimental Depot

only other officer, and he had to rely on me for his information about the men. We proceeded by rail to Portsmouth, but stopped for the night at Bath, where we were put in billets. These had to be paid for in the presence of an officer, so I, accompanied by a colour-sergeant carrying a bag of money, spent most of the night visiting public-houses for the purpose. Their civilian frequenters were so hospitable to the soldiers that most of these were under the influence of drink, but they were reported "all present and correct" next morning when the time came to start for Portsmouth.

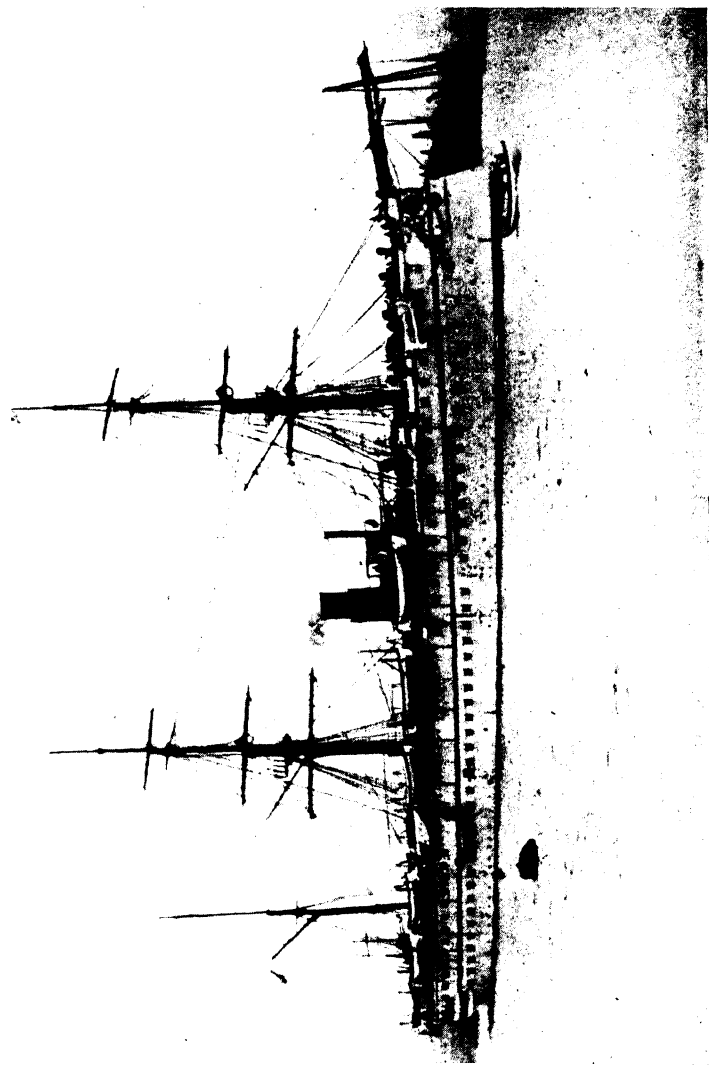
CHAPTER IV

FROM PORTSMOUTH TO DEOLALI

Opening of the Suez Canal.—The route first used by troopships in the season of 1868-9.—The Indian troopers.—The *Malabar* one of the first to pass through the Canal.—Provisions.—The troops.—Lieutenant-Colonel F. S. Roberts a passenger.—Quitting English shores.—An encouraging sergeant.—The Mediterranean.—Alexandria.—Overland to Suez.—Political conditions in Egypt at this time.—Mehemet Ali and Ismail Pasha.—The Red Sea.—Deaths at Sea.—Arrival at Bombay.—Sellers of merchandise.—A stowaway.—Draft ordered to Deolali.—The company present at the landing-stage.—A loquacious crowd.—Crows and their ways.—A drive.—The Towers of Silence on Malabar Hill.—Development of Bombay since those days.—Railway travelling in India.—Experiences undergone by the native third-class passenger.—Accommodation of officers and other ranks in troop trains.—Water supply.—A bad shot when selecting my servants at the start.—Good wishes of the traders on the platform as our train moved off.—Discomforts of the journey.

GREAT BRITAIN, Egypt, India and the British eastern overseas Dominions, as also the Mediterranean and Red Sea highways, are linked together, commercially and strategically, by their common association with the Suez Canal, which, as we all recognize, is of vital importance to the Empire. Although already used for traffic in 1868, the Canal was not, as a matter of fact, opened till the next year, when that ceremony was performed by the Empress of the French with great *éclat* in the presence of representatives and warships of nearly all the European Powers.

The Mediterranean-Suez Canal-Red Sea route to India was first adopted for the Indian trooping service during the winter of 1868-9, Bombay being at that time the only regular trooping port of the Indian Empire. In consequence of the great heat prevailing during the summer and autumn in tropical and sub-tropical countries and seas, the trooping season in normal times begins in October and ends in March. On the opening of the Canal, the practice previously in force of hiring merchant vessels to convey troops to and from India was discontinued, and four great troopships, all constructed on the same plan, were built by the Government. They were most uncomfortable, their top



H.M.S. "MALABAR."

[To face p. 40.]

From Portsmouth to Deolali

speed being only about nine knots an hour, and they were manned by naval personnel ; the officers detested the work, and in their dealings with the troops lost no opportunity of letting these know their distaste for the task ; the result was that there was continuous friction between the naval personnel and their passengers.*

The *Malabar* was one of the first of these ships to go through the Canal, in which there was at the time an obstruction. To enable her to pass over this without risk, it was necessary to lighten her, so she was ordered to call at Alexandria, and there the troops disembarked and proceeded to Suez by rail while she went through the Canal empty. She sailed from Portsmouth on the 7th of January, 1869, and arrived at Bombay on the 13th of February, packed so full that every inch of her space was occupied. The conservation of provisions was then still in its initial stage, and troopships carried ducks, geese, hens, sheep, slaughter-cattle and milch-cows. These "live rations" were stowed away in all sorts of places on the upper and the main deck, in close proximity to passengers' cabins—which did not add to the comfort of their occupants. The constitutions of the soldiers were fortified by a dram of rum issued daily in the forenoon ; those of the officers were fortified by the daily allowance of one pint of stout and one pint of sherry (the latter officially entitled "strong military ditto"), for which officers had to pay whether they consumed it or not.

On arriving on board, the first thing to do was to get the draft into its quarters, a duty which fell to me as my captain was ill and remained unfit for duty during the voyage. The troops—mostly young soldiers going abroad for the first time—consisted of the 6th Brigade Royal Artillery, of my draft, of a draft of the 108th Regiment, of many officers of other regiments, and of some small parties of non-commissioned officers and men—officially termed "details"—for Gibraltar and Malta. Major and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel (afterwards Field-Marshal Earl) Roberts, V.C., and his wife and their infant were among the passengers. He had just received the brevet for service in the Abyssinian Campaign, concluded a few months before, and he was

* Actually there were five Indian troopers, but one may have been built subsequent to 1868-9. All naval and military officers who took part in the trips of these vessels might not endorse the statement that there was "continuous" friction on board between the two services.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

returning to India to resume his appointment on the Headquarters Staff which he had vacated to proceed on active service. Both Colonel and Mrs. Roberts were said to be in precarious health and looked far from robust. He, even at this early stage of his career, enjoyed a high reputation in India, but my acquaintance with him on board the *Malabar* was slight, for a social chasm yawned between a distinguished lieutenant-colonel and a humble ensign; but in after years I came to know him and Lady Roberts pretty well.

The weather was rough when we sailed, and many fellow-passengers retired to their quarters, but as I did not suffer from sea-sickness I wandered about the ship. When the pilot left us off the Needles, it seemed like losing the last link with home, memory recalled friends and the happy time spent amongst them, and one felt like being exiled for ever; but I was aroused from a lugubrious reverie by the raucous voice of a sergeant shouting to a young soldier who had climbed on to the taffrail: "Come down out of that! You've no business there!" The man at once descended, and remarked apologetically: "I was only 'avin' a last look at 'ome, sergeant." To this the sergeant retorted contemptuously: "'Ome! You'll never see 'ome no more." Gloom after that vanished for good and all.

Beyond Gibraltar the weather was quite calm, and the evenings were delicious, while on the other side of Malta the nights became genial and the weather was very pleasant. The reflection of the moon on the calm sea at night was beautiful as one sat on deck and watched the sea-birds following in the wake of the ship as they strove to pick up anything eatable that was thrown overboard. There used to be parade services for all denominations on Sundays, the saloon piano providing the accompaniment to the singing in the case of the Church of England service. Going on deck one morning I found that the *Malabar* was steaming along close to the Egyptian coast, a series of low sand-hills surmounted by scattered palm trees stretching east and west as far as the eye could reach, while the lighthouses and minarets of Alexandria stood out a short distance ahead.

We disembarked in due course and marched to the railway station, but it then transpired that we would not start for two hours. The train was surrounded by natives with limes, oranges, grapes, plantains, eggs, and such-like articles for sale, and

From Portsmouth to Deolali

they disposed of these for cash or in exchange for articles of clothing, penknives, or even empty jam-pots and soda-water bottles. There were also numbers of well-bred donkeys for hire, named after English celebrities, and I secured one named "Mr. Gladstone," which proved a good and quick mover, while its owner ran behind and acted as guide as I rode round as much of the city as was practicable in the short time available. The guide, who spoke very quaint English, informed me that Musalmans consider the ass as the embodiment of valour, strength and intelligence, and he said that to designate anyone as *el hamar* (the ass) amounted to a great compliment. Alexandria in those days was the sewer of Eastern Europe and the Levant; but thanks to British rule it has changed vastly for the better, and, last time that I passed through, its sanitary and its moral condition were as good as in any European city of the same size.

Our train started with a succession of jerks and jumps which threw most of us out of our seats, and the same thing occurred when starting at every subsequent station, indicating that the engine-drivers were not experts. But in spite of this and of the flies, the journey was most interesting. Suez proved to be even dirtier than Alexandria. The buildings in the town, with the exception of a big derelict hotel which had had a great vogue before the opening of the Canal, were of a mean and unpretentious description.

The Turks at this time were the nominal rulers of Egypt, having conquered the country in A.D. 1517, at a time when it was weak and disorganized—as it has indeed almost ever been when under native rule. The British had occupied the Nile Delta during the course of the Napoleonic Wars and had established peace and prosperity in the region; but on the conclusion of the contest with France they withdrew their military forces and a fierce civil war at once broke out between contending factions for supremacy. This ended in the complete victory of Mehemet Ali, an Albanian Turk, who made himself to all intents and purposes an independent sovereign and whose armies in the course of several campaigns inflicted a series of reverses upon the Ottoman military forces. In the end, while acknowledging the nominal suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, he made the pashalik of Egypt hereditary in his family, and his fourth son, Ismail Pasha, was the Pasha when we passed through it in 1869.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

This Ismail Pasha was tyrannous and was wildly extravagant. By the most arbitrary methods he extorted exorbitant taxes out of the Copts, or true Egyptians, who form the vast majority of the population, and he furthermore borrowed huge sums in France and in England, saddling his country with a burden of debt. He was in the interests of his own security in the habit of sharing the funds which he thus acquired with the small minority of Egyptians who were of Syrian, Arab, Albanian and Turkish descent and who were termed the "effendi" class, and by this means he prevented their intriguing against him at Constantinople. Englishmen dwelling in Egypt predicted that the opening of the Suez Canal would sound the death-knell of his disorderly rule, as such a state of things could not be long tolerated by our Government in view of Great Britain's vital interest in the water-way. To avoid offending Turkish susceptibilities and the susceptibilities of virtually independent Egypt, it was a rule that British troops when passing through the Delta went unarmed. We therefore left our rifles on board the *Malabar*, a fact which convinced me that the existing state of affairs could not continue much longer.

We found the heat in the Red Sea very trying. The sun poured its rays down through a moisture-laden atmosphere, and, as the breeze was a following one, there was not a breath of air either on deck or between decks. Nearly everyone on board felt this change from temperate conditions severely. Prickly heat, a most excruciatingly irritating rash that is common to all tropical and sub-tropical climates, attacked most of the men and women. The infants on board, moreover, suffered terribly from it; their crying was piteous and one felt very sorry for them.

Sailors had a superstition that sharks follow a ship when there is a corpse on board. As a matter of fact we saw none on this voyage until we reached the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, *anglice* "The Gate of Tears," where a gunner died, and they thereupon appeared in large numbers. His burial at sea, the first ceremony of the kind that I had witnessed, was very solemn and impressive. On entering the Indian Ocean the weather proved to be much cooler, and the sea became quite calm and looked like a vast sheet of glass. The sunsets were magnificent and the nights delightful, the stars shining more brilliantly than on the clearest of frosty nights in England. When we were passing Aden the

From Portsmouth to Deolali

Roberts' baby died—I am not sure whether it was a boy or a girl—and an untoward incident occurred at its burial. Instead of consigning it to the deep wrapped in a flag as is customary, a tin box was used for a coffin, and this on being put overboard floated. So the *Malabar* was hove to and a boat was lowered to sink it, but it disappeared just before the boat reached the spot. The boat then put about, and the ship got under way again.

One soon got tired of this shipboard life and, looking impatiently forward to the end of the voyage, counted the days like a schoolboy looking forward to his holidays. It was amusing to hear the different plans that passengers were making with regard to what they meant to do on landing, plans entirely unsuitable for life in hot climates such as all but a few had to expect. We entered Bombay harbour just as the Indian dawn with its wonderful colouring was spreading out behind the dark line of the distant Western Ghats, and the great city and the placid waters of its haven were speedily touched with opalescent tints, such as are never seen in northern latitudes, except on the horizon during sunsets on a very few fine summer evenings. The spectacle was most striking, and I have never forgotten that first experience although I have often seen the same effects since.

Directly the *Malabar* dropped anchor she was surrounded by a crowd of boats of strange and varied shapes, propelled by almost naked men who were very black and of wretched physique. These craft were loaded up with wares of all sorts—jewellery, ready-made clothing, various kinds of fruits of immense size and of strange shapes and colours, and the owners of this cargo wore what appeared to us to be extraordinary costumes. They made a tremendous din, shouting to those on board: “Salaam, sahib. You buy? You buy?” while holding up wares for inspection. But we had orders to disembark without delay, and we were so busy getting ready for the shore that we had no time to pay much attention to these people. Seeing this, they took their departure hoping to meet us on shore when we should be less occupied.

It so happened that while the disembarkation was proceeding, a female stowaway, said to be a soldier's wife not on the strength, was discovered. She was handed over to a European policeman for return to England by the next troopship, and she used most abusive language to the adjutant as she was being passed over

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the side, cursing him in her fury : “ You —— —, I’ve been four times this far, and, so help me, I’ll get up country next time.” Nobody on board seemed to know whether she was married or not. At that time Englishwomen of doubtful character were not allowed to land in India.

On landing the officer commanding received orders for the troops to proceed by train to Deolali that afternoon, and to detrain there and await further orders. Our train we found drawn up in readiness at a siding close to the landing-stage, and the siding was soon invaded by a swarm of natives, some of whom we had seen before. They consisted of money-changers, of jewellers, of haberdashers, of hotel touts, of fruit sellers, of domestic servants seeking employment, etc., and those who had goods for sale brought them along in itinerant shops composed of boxes carried on the heads of coolies. The natives, other than the coolies, were clothed in brilliant coloured and quaint costumes, whereas the coolies wore practically no costume at all. While the coolies maintained a dejected silence, the rest of the natives were vociferous almost beyond belief, all talking at the top of their voices and all at the same time. Their conversation, which consisted of praise of their own personal virtues and of the excellent quality and the cheapness of their goods, was accompanied by vigorous gesticulations. They appeared to think that whoever shouted the loudest and gesticulated the most energetically would attain his object. The din that they created was deafening, and it was increased by the cawing of numberless crows perched on every point of vantage.

These, while taking a general interest in the proceedings, did not allow this to interfere with their special object of picking up what there was to be had to eat. If anything edible was dropped a flight of the fowl pounced upon it and engaged in battle for its possession. The successful one flew off with the spoil, hoping to devour it at leisure, while the others pursued, cawing with redoubled energy and striving to wrest the prize from the victor. They were on terms of friendly familiarity with the natives, and one would from time to time even perch on the naked limb of a cooly ; but they viewed the white man with suspicion and only approached him with much caution. The Indian crow is indeed a most diverting bird and on account of his habits has been called by naturalists *corvus impudens*. In

From Portsmouth to Deolali

those parts of India where doors and windows are always kept open during the daytime they will enter rooms and will make themselves quite at home. They steal victuals from the table, stick their beaks into everything, upset bottles, glasses and inkstands, and do much mischief. They are very droll and clever. One will get in front of a feeding dog, and another behind, and they will then caw noisily to distract the dog's attention from his meal. If this does not work, the one behind pecks the dog's tail. The dog turns round to snap at his tormentor, and in the meantime the crow in front nips in and purloins some of the food.

When we had landed in the early morning there was a cool sea breeze ; but as the sun became more vertical the breeze died away, the heat increased unpleasantly, and millions of flies appeared on the scene and attacked both natives and white men. They were most annoying to us, but the natives did not mind them in the least, allowing them to light on exposed parts of their bodies without taking the trouble to flick them off. They seemed to be on as friendly terms with the flies as they were with the crows, and indeed to be on terms of familiarity with most of God's creatures. The combination of heat, din and smell became most unpleasant, but I felt compensated for the discomfort by the novelty of such surroundings. The natives were cheery, good-tempered and jocose, while the quaint expressions used by the few who had any knowledge of English were most amusing.

About one o'clock I got leave and started off on a drive round the city intending to see as much of it as possible in the time before the train was due to start, 6 p.m. In the course of the drive I visited the top of Malabar Hill, where are situated the *dokhmas* or Parsee charnel-houses—also called the “ Towers of Silence ”—of which there were six. They were in beautiful grounds, quite close to the reservoir which supplied the city with water. Access to the grounds is forbidden to people of other religions without special permission, so that I could not explore them as I was able to do some years afterwards. Once the towers have been consecrated, no one except a corpse-bearer is allowed to enter or approach within thirty yards of it. Five of the six towers are circular stone buildings, about twelve to fourteen feet high and ninety feet in diameter. The centre part is hollow, and chambers excavated underneath are kept filled

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

with charcoal. At some distance from the top, inside, there are receptacles for the corpses, which are so arranged that what is left falls into the charcoal-filled chambers after the flesh has been devoured by vultures. The sixth tower stood quite apart from the others ; it was square in plan and was only used for the remains of those who have suffered death for crimes. Vultures are always to be seen brooding apathetically on the tops of the towers or their neighbourhood, but they cheer up on the approach of a funeral party. Individuals of denominations other than Parsee who dwelt in this neighbourhood complained that the vultures sometimes dropped portions of defunct Parsee in their gardens and their verandahs, and it has become necessary to cover over the reservoir.

Since that first visit to Bombay the city has been developed and improved in many ways, but the natives of poor class are still housed in dangerously overcrowded dwellings and under insanitary conditions. The whole place was a fertile breeding-ground for infectious and contagious diseases up to the time of the plague of 1896. Since that outbreak more attention has been paid to sanitation, and the health of the community has consequently improved.

Railway travelling is cheaper in India than in any other country I know, and, except for third-class passengers, it is very comfortable. First and second class carriages have sleeping accommodation, and mail trains have refreshment cars attached to them.* Third-class passengers, on the other hand, have a bad time. The carriages are packed. Native passengers are cheated and abused by petty native officials, and they are cuffed and vilified by the native police. They usually arrive at the station hours before their train is due to start ; there are few stations at which there is a third-class waiting-room, so crowds of dusky travellers are to be seen lying about, like corpses, on the platform and in station yards. As a train approaches they resurrect and rush to secure seats. The women carry the family baggage, and the children hang on to their garments very much as baby rats do to their mother's tail during migrations. Then a violent commotion ensues while the mob force themselves into compartments, everybody apparently assuming that the louder they shout the better is their chance of gaining a seat. When

* Restaurant cars were only introduced at a date long subsequent to 1869.

From Portsmouth to Deolali

the train steams on, those who have failed to obtain accommodation resume their slumbers and patiently await the arrival of another one.

At that time, and until I left India, British officers were provided with first-class accommodation in troop trains. Indian officers, on the other hand, were only allowed second-class, and this is derogatory to their position and status; they should travel first-class as a matter of course. British non-commissioned officers and private soldiers are quite rightly allowed second-class accommodation. The native passengers, I noticed, all carried lotas (a special pattern of brass pot), and at each station we arrived at they set up a tremendous bawling for the bhistis (water-carriers), for the Indian is ever thirsty when travelling by train owing to the heat and the dust, and owing to the sweet-stuff that he is for ever consuming. The water-carriers for the service of Hindus are Brahmins, from whose hands Hindus of all castes may drink; for Musalmans there are water-carriers of their own faith; for Christians there is a special water supply.

I had picked out a couple of servants at Bombay from amongst the crowd who had presented themselves for hire on our arrival, but I found later, when I had come to know something more of the country, that these menials happened to be of low caste and that—in those parts of India in which I served—the presence of such within my household was liable to act as a bar to my establishing friendly relations with natives of good or of respectable castes. Visitors of the superior kind object to be shown in by low caste servants. They are, moreover, apt to conclude from the fact of an officer employing such people that the officer is of low caste himself. I therefore in due course got rid of the pair, although they were good servants, and replaced them by others of higher caste.

The natives who had been clinging on to us all the day wished us a very cordial good-bye on the departure of our train from its siding, from which it seemed reasonable to conclude that they were satisfied with the way that they had been dealt with. Some of them, when making their farewells, exclaimed: "I hope that God will make you a Lat Sahib. I will pray to Him night and day to do so." This is a common expression of good-will used by natives of all classes to Englishmen, for every Indian, even the most ignorant jungle-wallah, has heard of a

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Lord. They all know about the Mulki (Civil) or Burra (Great) Lat Sahib—as they call the Governor-General; and they know about the Jangi (War) Lat Sahib—as they call the Commander-in-Chief. Curiously enough the natives look upon a “ Lat Sahib ” as being of higher caste than an ordinary Englishman, although they may have known the Lat Sahib in question when he was quite a small man—this, although under their own caste system a person born in one caste can never belong to another one. It shows how illogical the Indian mind is.

For some miles we traversed a low-lying plain, a region of palm-fringed lagoons, of fields where the crops had just been harvested, of villages perched on low mounds and of numberless estuaries. Then the train laboured in the moonlight up the Ghauts and eventually debouched on the table-lands of the Dekkan. The whole journey was extremely dusty, and it was hot till we mounted the Ghauts. The dust lay thick, filling one's nose, ears, mouth and hair; but I went to sleep, regardless of the mosquitoes, which love the fresh blood of youth straight from the British Isles, and when I woke up at Deolali I had about the worst thirst of my life.

CHAPTER V

A STAY AT DEOLALI

The Deolali rest camp.—Its condition in 1869.—We are accommodated in tents, the barracks all being occupied.—A cholera epidemic causes us to be detained for several months.—I am made adjutant.—Drawbacks to Deolali at this time.—State of the neighbouring villages.—The approach of the rainy season.—A violent storm.—White ants.—Cholera among the troops.—A rapid death.—The question of Roman Catholic priests in India.—The inhabitants of the local bazaar.—Quarantine restrictions removed.—Soldiers "jungling"; occasional difficulties with the natives.—Vagueness as to what animals really are sacred.—Nasik.—The pipal tree.—Idols.—Musalmans in the Nasik environs.—My interest in the natives.—The Finance babus veto my adjutancy after I have been performing the duty for months.

THE rest camp at Deolali when we arrived there in 1869 was still in an embryonic condition. Barrack accommodation existed for only a limited number of troops, and as this accommodation was already occupied by other detachments, we were put into tents. British troops in barracks are in the hot weather provided with punkahs and tatties, the former when the atmosphere is still and the latter when the wind blows. But these conveniences were not provided under canvas, the tents we were in being indeed too overcrowded for using them had they been available. So that camp life in the hot weather was none too pleasant.

A cholera epidemic of a particularly virulent type broke out soon after our arrival, covering a wide area. All the routes that troops then in Deolali would have to traverse to reach their proper stations passed through this infected area. The season was already so far advanced that, if there were to be any delay in the various detachments starting for their destinations, it would be dangerous for them to undertake the movements in view of the heat. We were therefore ordered to stop where we were until the next marching season, which meant remaining till the beginning of the coming November. It was a great disappointment, as I was most anxious to make acquaintance with

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

my regiment, but I was consoled to some extent by being selected to act as adjutant of the infantry details, who numbered, all told, about five hundred. This was my first staff appointment, although an unimportant one, and it was satisfactory to get it as it provided some extra work and much valuable experience.

At a date subsequent to the time I speak of, Deolali came to be a well-arranged and not unpleasant cantonment. But when our draft was spending several months there it was quite the reverse. Drinking water was procured from wells fed by a catchment area which was tainted. For lack of water there were no gardens. Roads did not exist, rough cart tracks doing duty for such. The surrounding country moreover consists of black cotton soil, with patches of rock, and cotton soil, when it is not subjected to moisture owing to cultivation or to forest growths, cracks during the hot season, deep fissures of varying widths then show up everywhere, and this makes it very awkward for riding over. Then, when the rainy season sets in in due course, the cotton soil becomes one mass of mud. Added to this, the rock absorbs the sun's rays during the day, and the consequence is that when hot weather prevails the radiation makes the atmosphere around Deolali like the mouth of a furnace. Even when we arrived in March there was uncommonly little vegetation to be seen, and such as there was, was burnt yellow.

All the neighbouring villages were filthy in the extreme; the stench in their vicinity was sickening, as is indeed not unusual throughout India. Owing to the condition of the villages and of the ground near them the whole of the country around Deolali was nothing better than an ideal breeding-place for disease-carrying microbes and for noxious parasites of every description; and the spread of epidemics and of illness of all kinds was in reality furthered in every way possible by the habits of the local population. It was apparent to the veriest novice in sanitation that the cholera, which soon invaded the neighbourhood, would assuredly spread to the troops in the cantonment in which methods left much to be desired, for the cold season was rapidly passing away.

The hot season soon set in in earnest, with a temperature of upwards of 105° in the shade in the daytime, accompanied

A Stay at Deolali

by a torrid dust-laden wind from the south-east. This blast generally lasted from 10 a.m. till 9 p.m., and it was followed by a still night and early morning of excessive sultriness. Till late in May the only variation from these unpleasant weather conditions was the occurrence of periodical whirlwind storms, accompanied by clouds of dust, that are known in India as "devils," the more violent being accompanied by claps of thunder and vivid lightning, with a few drops of rain. About the 20th of May one heard distant thunder which heralded a whirlwind of tremendous violence, accompanied by forked lightning and followed by heavier rain than we had yet experienced. The tempest knocked down several of the tents and carried their contents considerable distances, some being blown away to half a mile off. Not only clothes, bedding, chairs, books and papers were flying about in all directions, but large sheets of corrugated iron were torn from the roofs of cook-houses and lavatories. After this storm had passed off there followed a short period of sultry weather, with a delightful scent of rain-soaked earth, while millions of winged white ants made their appearance.

The rains definitely broke shortly afterwards, and lasted with intervals till the beginning of September, becoming gradually less and less violent as the weeks passed. Within a month of the first downpour, all the surrounding country had become clothed in green crops, usually millet or cotton, except at spots that were being preserved for late sowings. New grass, fresh and green, sprang up through the withered remains of last year's crop, and the few trees to be seen about Deolali burst into leaf. Legions of flying insects moreover appeared, most of them, such as mosquitoes and flies, being pests that torment man and beast, and frogs croaked in every stagnant pool.

Cholera appeared among the troops at the beginning of July and caused deaths daily. The medical services were not in those days what they are now—bad enough as that was when I finally left India, mainly owing to paucity of British medical officers and of funds. The sick were therefore but indifferently attended to, and the daily funerals depressed young soldiers fresh from home. Officers did what they could to keep up the men's spirits, by nursing the sick and by getting up theatricals and amusements for those unaffected. One of the most rapid

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

deaths I have ever seen during a long experience of cholera visitations was that of an army schoolmaster who had taken a most active part in these entertainments, for he appeared on our "sing song" stage at about 9.30 one evening and he was dead at 11 p.m. This had a very dispiriting effect on our men, by whom he was much liked and respected; and in epidemics of this kind fear is a sure precursor of an attack. A padre is therefore as necessary as a doctor, and there was no resident chaplain of any denomination at Deolali then.

A considerable proportion of the men, moreover, were Irish Roman Catholics, and the only priest who ever came to the station was a Portuguese-Indian whose English was unintelligible. Portuguese-Indians are largely employed as Roman Catholic chaplains because British priests could not exist on the inadequate salary allowed. When I left India this was fixed at 200 rupees a month, from which the chaplain had to make over 100 rupees to his bishop, who got no salary at all. The lowest pay of a Church of England chaplain was 500 rupees and Church of England bishops were suitably paid. It is unfortunately the case that all the foreign Roman Catholic priests I have come across in India are unfit to minister to British soldiers, owing to ignorance of English and of British ways. It constitutes a genuine grievance, and one which I tried hard when Commander-in-Chief to induce the Government of India to redress, but without success.

Ever since the time of our arrival at the station the garrison of Deolali had been restricted to cantonment limits as a precautionary measure against cholera, and quarantine had been maintained against outsiders. We had consequently been seeing very little of the country and of its peoples except for the denizens of the cantonment bazaar, which was inhabited by some three thousand natives hailing from all parts of India. A few belonged to the locality; but the vast majority came from afar off, having arrived with regiments and detachments on the way to England in course of relief, and having remained where they were awaiting employment with troops from home who were proceeding to their respective districts. This bazaar served for a miniature ethnological exhibition of the diversity of races who were serving the British Army in India in menial capacities, and it afforded a good idea of the heterogeneous

A Stay at Deolali

character of the population. Natives belonging to the different races were wholly unlike, not only in dress and in personal appearance, but also in language, in religion, and in manners and customs. They spoke of one another as foreigners, and the representatives of the various provinces kept apart.

Shortly after the cessation of the epidemic among the troops it also disappeared in the district, whereupon quarantine restrictions were withdrawn. The effect was immediate, for all ranks resumed their normal life, and the soldiers set about amusing themselves as best they could, and a popular pastime with them was "jungling." The word jungle means uninhabited land, which may consist either of a trackless forest or merely of a small stretch of grass and scrub. Soldiers engaged in "jungling" do not, however, confine themselves to such places; they spread over the whole country in the neighbourhood of cantonments in pursuit of what they consider game, and they shoot everything that they see, from a dove to a deer, often doing so in close proximity to villages. Jungling parties usually consist of half a dozen members, one of whom, the happy possessor of a sporting weapon of sorts, does the shooting; the others, less fortunate, act as beaters and retrievers. It is a harmless and healthy amusement in a land where the British soldier has few recreations, so it deserves every encouragement. But some precautions are necessary to prevent soldiers when engaged in it unintentionally offending the religious prejudices of natives. The creatures held sacred by natives vary in different provinces, and in most parts there are found Hindu and Jain shrines, within a certain radius of which the life of no sentient thing may be taken.

Local orders are in force everywhere prohibiting killing sacred things or taking life in protected areas. But new arrivals, especially British soldiers, are often quite ignorant of them, with the result that quarrels sometimes take place between them and the natives. To avoid such regrettable incidents all that is necessary is for civil and military authorities to see that sportsmen understand the rules on the subject before they are allowed to engage in shikar. An even safer method is to provide jungling parties with a trustworthy local shikari. Shikari means "hunter"; shikar is a Persian word denoting "hunting," which, in India, is used to express the pursuit of all kinds of

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

game by all methods. Natives are very vague in their differentiation between the different species of animals which they hold sacred. For example, nilgai (lit., blue cow) is the name given to the largest of the Indian antelope species; these animals have a somewhat bovine appearance, so in many parts of India they are held sacred, and yet they have nothing in common with kine, from which they are a distinct species. Buffaloes, wild and tame, are the same genus as kine, but they are nowhere held sacred. There are many similar anomalies.

The town of Nasik, some twelve miles distant by a good metalled road, became a great attraction to me, and I visited it frequently. It owes its importance to its sanctity among Hindus, who make pilgrimages to it in large numbers nearly all drawn from the central and southern provinces. It was the headquarters of the civil district in which the cantonment is situated. The civil station, where the British officials lived, is a little British settlement close to, but apart from, the native town. It was well laid out, and the few British officials lived in spacious houses, standing in well-kept gardens at some little distance from their offices and from the quarters of their native subordinates; these were nearly all English-educated Brahmins. Its buildings were constructed in semi-English style, and the verdure and cleanliness afforded an agreeable contrast to the sun-dried, treeless cantonment and to the unpleasant-smelling native town. I soon got to know the British civil officials, and through them some English-speaking Brahmins, who coached me in a few of the details of native etiquette. Even the little that then I learnt aided explorations in the native town and the surrounding country. To an increased knowledge of native etiquette and to proficiency acquired in the vernaculars of the various races, I attribute my success in later years in establishing kindly relations with the people of the country.

Notwithstanding its vile odours and the filth of many parts of it, the native town of Nasik was well worth seeing. It contains some fine temples, which are picturesquely situated on the banks of the Godavari, along which pipal trees were growing. The temple walls have to be continually guarded against the insidious roots of these trees, the penetrating seeds of which sprout in the most unlikely places, and if allowed to grow will in time destroy the best lime-set walls. Hindus, and especially those

A Stay at Deolali

of the commercial, scribe, and priestly castes, regard the pipal as sacred and worship it. They believe that water supplied to its roots in the name of a deceased relative or friend goes to quench the thirst of these in other worlds. These castes consider lying and cheating to be perfectly legitimate in the practice of their hereditary vocations, except when it is carried out under the shade of a pipal or when dealing with a Brahmin. Such conduct under the shade of a pipal or directed towards a Brahmin is regarded, on the other hand, as a most heinous offence, for which the gods will mete out severe post-mortem punishment.

Both in the town and in the temples were to be seen grotesque idols of various gods, as well as images of the sacred cow, skillfully carved in stone. Pictures of idols were also used in profusion to decorate the walls of temples, dwelling-houses and shops. Well draped young women who observed *pardah* (covered their faces) very casually were noticeable, walking in the streets; their faces and hands were stained with yellow and they wore nose-rings, necklaces, armlets, anklets and other ornaments of gold which looked to be of considerable value; they were virgins employed as singing and dancing girls to the gods.

The Musalman community inhabiting the district around Deolali was at that time a needy one, which could not indulge in the luxury of masjids (mosques); idgahs were substituted for these in the various villages. An idgah consists of a platform with a wall at its eastern end in which there is inserted a pulpit, an arrangement which enables the worshippers to face towards Mecca; they are never built with roofs to them in the style of a masjid, and they are only used as open-air places of assembly for prayer on certain religious festivals. "Id," it may be explained, means a festival or solemnity, while "gah" means a place. At Nasik and other towns in the vicinity I noticed that Hindus and Musalmans of the lowest classes joined in one another's religious ceremonies; but in the villages the two communities kept entirely apart.

Everything that I saw in connection with the natives during these early months spent in their country filled me with curiosity; it was all so different from what one was accustomed to. I was greatly impressed by the vast numbers of the Indian population as compared with the very few British dwelling in the country.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

I was also struck by the many languages that were spoken, the many castes that existed, and by the many religions that appeared to have their votaries; for besides Musalmans and Hindus there are people of numerous other persuasions. One could not fail to be interested in the different habits, manners and customs of these people and to take note of their various costumes, and in some cases of their want of costume. The local architecture, the queer vehicles, and the indifferent physique of the majority of the population, as also the diminutive size of their domestic animals, were very noticeable. I observed that individuals belonging to different castes and to different religions worked together in apparently friendly relations, but that they held little social intercourse and that they invariably separated into their different caste groups when it came to their meals.

One morning about this time I enjoyed my first introduction to the methods of the Indian Finance Department. It came in the shape of a letter to my commanding officer from the Controller of Military Accounts, and it pronounced my appointment as adjutant, the work of which I had been performing for the past six months, to be inadmissible. The appointment had been sanctioned by Bombay headquarters, which exercised authority over Deolali, and my G.O. therefore remonstrated, representing that it had been made in accordance with rules distinctly laid down in the elaborate pay-code. The reply was to the effect that the wording of the paragraphs on which he relied to support his contention were certainly somewhat vague, although they might be held to bear the interpretation which he put on them, but that the paragraphs would be amended by an Army Order shortly to be issued, as that was not their intention, and that in the meantime the objection to the appointment must be upheld. It was therefore cancelled—which did not much matter to me.

There was no pay attached to the post, except a trifling office-allowance to cover the cost of stationery and the pay of a soldier-clerk, to meet which I was drawing an allowance of about £2 a month. Had the appointment not been made, the cost of the stationery and the pay of a clerk for the office work of my own detachment would have been met by contingent bills on regimental headquarters. Owing to the cancelling of the appoint-

A Stay at Deolali

ment I could not recover even this, for I had no detailed accounts of the amount of paper used. Still, the sum which I had to refund was small and didn't matter, and during the few months that I had been doing the work I had gained valuable experience. It was my first contact with "babu rule," and it rather amused me.

CHAPTER VI

JOINING REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS AT MHOW

By rail to Khandwa.—The old plan of marching before dawn.—Bullock-cart transport.—The commandeering system and its evils.—The drivers of the carts.—The killing off of big game ; none seen on this march.—The monkeys along the road.—Birds.—Camping near water in India.—The bees.—Mandata.—We reach Mhow.—The State of Indore.—The mutiny of its troops in 1857 and the conduct of its Maharaja.—The Mhow garrison.—Difficulties as to accommodation.—My early experience of this.—Increase in cost of keeping horses in India since those days.—Question of officers' pay.—Life in cantonments.—Getting into touch with natives outside.—Realization of the Indian population that British rule is all to their advantage.—Custom of sending " dhalis."—Life of the British soldier in India at this time.—" Billy stink."—Hitch at a funeral and how it was got over.—A padre's ministrations to the sick.—Hymns and hers.—Rankers with the Indian Army.—The Bhils.—Their customs and quaint beliefs.—The Brinjaras.—Their services under Lord Lake.—My experiences with them.—The Regiment moves to Bombay.—Pleasant relations which I had established with natives around Mhow.—An incident on the march to Khandwa ; the bandsmen and Holkar.—Visit of the Duke of Edinburgh to Bombay.—Contentment of its inhabitants in those days.—Military duties there.—The Presidency system.—its advantages from the point of view of the native soldier.—The Regiment ordered home.—Question of joining the Staff Corps.—I decide to do so.

EARLY in the month of November we received orders to join regimental headquarters at Mhow, to which Khandwa, situated about two hundred miles to the north-east of Deolali, was then the nearest railway station, and in due course we entrained for that place. Since my arrival in India I had been much struck with the vast numbers of the native population and with the comparatively insignificant proportion borne to these by the Europeans ; but on this journey I was almost more struck with the fact that the railways and the telegraphs were so very dependent on natives for their working. We started in the afternoon and travelled all night, arriving at our destination at sunrise.

The weather here in Central India felt quite cool and refreshing compared with that which we had left behind us at Deolali. Fires glimmered amongst the trees near the station. Bullock-

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

carts, each drawn by a pair of bullocks with tinkling bells hanging from the neck, were drawn up outside to act as transport on our march. Little parties of Musalmans were to be seen engaged in their morning prayers and genuflexions. The din of tom-toms and the discordant braying of brass instruments echoing from many Hindu temples told of Brahmins engaged in morning service to propitiate their gods, and all this noise mingled with that of the chattering of birds and the howling of jackals as they retired to their lairs to slumber till night should come round again. The people whom one saw here appeared to be of better physique than those nearer to Bombay ; their languages differed from those spoken about Deolali, and all of them were shivering in their scanty cotton garments in the sharp early-morning air. After getting clear of the train we moved off and formed a rest-camp about two miles from the station. We had received orders to commence our march to Mhow at 4 a.m. on the following morning.

Troops, both British and native, in those days invariably marched at this early hour, regardless of weather conditions and of temperature ; it meant that all movements were carried out by what practically amounted to night marches ; these are always trying, although they are unavoidable if the heat is great. This practice continued for many years, so strong is the force of habit—especially in the East. At a considerably later date, the Indian military authorities awoke at last to the absurdity of the arrangement, and they came to realize that there is a vast difference in the climatic conditions which prevail in some parts of India from those which prevail in other parts, and that the temperature is very different at some seasons from what it is at others. So they from that time forward permitted the commanding officer on the spot to decide the hour at which a march was to commence, and the army has, in consequence, been saved much quite unnecessary fatigue since then.

The same pattern of lumbering bullock-cart has been in use for thousands of years in every part of India that I have visited, and the bullocks have been driven on the same time-honoured plan, that of tail-twisting. Their tails, from the root half-way down, are like cork-screws, and many are broken off in the middle. But tail-twisting not being considered a sufficient “persuader,” a “raw” is often established on the hind-quarters

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

of a poor beast by the cruel use of a goad. Although the very life of India is religion, although every thought and action of its peoples is governed thereby, and although their religions inculcate kindness to animals, these are commonly treated with the utmost brutality by the natives, and those natives who object on religious grounds to the taking of life are often the worst offenders. The bullocks forming our transport on this march to Mhow were for the most part emaciated, all of them had cork-screw tails, those of some of the wretched animals were broken off in the middle, and others of the poor beasts had festering sores on their hind-quarters. The condition of most of them was pitiable.

It was the custom then, it remained so until I left India, and it may prevail still for all that I know to the contrary, to commandeer the services of cultivators and their carts when troops were in need of transport for marches in the ordinary course of relief. This system inflicts great hardship on the peasantry, especially in those provinces where the movements of troops frequently take place. The absence of the cultivator and his bullocks from his farm even for only a few days is apt to cause him serious loss, especially so when this occurs at a time when harvesting is in full swing—as it usually is when troops are on the move. The agents who carry out the commandeering of the transport are petty native officials who are generally oppressive and corrupt. They allow those who will bribe them to escape, while they retain great part of the hire-money of those who are impressed. This impressment is necessitated by the failure of the Government to maintain an adequate transport service in time of peace, and the evil is increased by vehicles for carrying the baggage of civil officials being obtained by the same process.

Our road followed a somewhat tortuous course, along which the patient, bell-tinkling cattle of our transport crawled, unguided by the drivers; these, muffled in the little clothing that they possessed, slept soundly on top of the loads. When startled from their slumbers they would commence frantic tail-twisting with one hand and prodding with the goad by the other hand, accompanying this with frenzied objurgations of the bullocks and of their female relations of all degrees and generations. So we proceeded on our way, marching from fifteen to eighteen miles daily, and getting into camp by noon, which allowed the rest of the day for exploring the neighbourhood or shooting.

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

It is by night that the greater fauna of the forest issue from their lairs in search of food and water. In those days game of all kinds abounded in this region, and is still to be found by the sportsman who knows where to seek and who knows how to set about the thing ; the greater denizens of the forest have to be sought out in remote spots, for they will not approach the metalled roads, or indeed any place frequented by their enemy, man. Owing to this, I did not see any specimens of the bigger game during this first march, although one sometimes heard the distant bark of sambur at night, for sound travels far in India during the dark hours. Sambur are the greatest of Indian woodland deer and in point of size are inferior only to the wapiti of North America ; they stand about fourteen hands at the wither and the stags have massive horns of six points. These antlers grow to a length of over forty-eight inches in some cases, and they are in velvet as a rule during March and early April, although a few old stags remain in hard horn all the year round. At one halting-place I walked three or four miles into the jungle, accompanied by a native with whom I had struck up an acquaintance, and in due course we came to an open space where the bark was peeled off the trunks of the adjacent trees and where the ground was much trampled. My companion told me that this was the *akhara* (arena) where stags met to fight on moonlight nights, while the does watched the contest and, after this was over, accepted the victor as their lord. There was a pool near by where the combatants rolled in the mire after the battle ; one could tell from the footprints around this water what the animals were which frequented the spot. The only wild animals that I actually saw along the route were jackals, foxes, wild cats and monkeys. These latter were plentiful and their ways were diverting. They used to move along in herds by the tops of trees parallel to the road, watching the column on the move. They would jump from branch to branch, the dames with babies clasped tight to their breasts taking the lead ; these were followed by frisky monkey-maidens and monkey-youths, while solemn monkey-ancients brought up the rear.

Birds also were plentiful. The country through which we passed resounded with the lively chatter of green parrots, starlings of a species called *Mina* by the natives, jays and sparrows, as also with the strident cry of the peafowl and with the never-ceasing

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

cawing of the crows. Vultures and hawks frequented the neighbourhood of the road, while numbers of hoopoes, doves and grey-legged partridge were to be seen. Bulbuls, moreover, made themselves heard. The bulbul is the only bird in India that possesses a melodious note, and is on that account often called the Indian nightingale; its song and its beauty provide the theme for some of the poems of Hafiz of Shiraz which are so well known in Northern India, but its vocal powers, greatly as they are admired in Persia and India, fall far short of those to which the European nightingale can lay claim.

The still air in the vicinity of a river was bitterly cold at night and in the early morning at this time of the year, as we found when we reached the Narbada. At dawn the atmosphere becomes surcharged with dews which saturate all the surrounding jungle, and the surface of the water then becomes shrouded with a thick white vapour which lasts until the sun has become strong enough to disperse it. This is found to be generally the case wherever there is water all over Central and Northern India. By many authorities it is held that camping in the neighbourhood of streams or tanks, and therefore in localities influenced by this vapour, is conducive to malarial fever; and this may be so. But the neighbourhood of water is naturally cooler than elsewhere in hot weather, and I have always, when alone, chosen such ground for encamping, and without experiencing any ill effects; but when with troops I have been careful to avoid it lest those more susceptible to fevers than myself might suffer.

Wandering into the jungle to some distance from the road one day I noticed swarms of honey-bees hanging from the boughs of trees. Bees in this part of India hate the heat of the sun; they sleep during the daytime and they only become busy after sundown. Any sudden noise, or unwonted smell, such as that of tobacco, gives them umbrage and they are then apt to attack the object of their wrath with the utmost fury, so much so that men are sometimes killed by them. The natives who are accustomed to go into the jungle have various safe ways of plundering them of their stores of honey.

I visited the shrine of Mandata, which was about six miles from our camping ground at the point where we crossed the Narbada. It is situated on a minor water-course which flows into that river and is regarded as a spot of very special sanctity

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

by the Hindus of this part of India. On the following day we marched through the thickest forest that we had yet encountered, and we then surmounted the Vindhya Hills by zigzags at an easy gradient, finally debouching on the Malwa table-land about nine miles from Mhow, and we met with a warm welcome from the regiment on marching into the cantonment. This is situated about thirteen miles south-west of the city of Indore, which is the capital of the feudatory native state of the same name, ruled by the Holkar family. Feudatory states are entitled **Maharathi**, **Rajput**, **Sikh**, **Musalman**, according to the caste or religion of the ruling family, but this does not necessarily imply that the rulers are of the same caste or religion as their subjects, or that they even speak the same language as the bulk of the population. There are, as a matter of fact, very few Mahrathas in the Indore state; most of the land-owners are Rajputs, although a considerable number of them are Musalmans; the rest of the inhabitants are of various castes and races and include many aborigines of the Dravidian stock. Natives belonging to the higher castes strongly object to being the subjects of the Sudra Holkars, who merely belong to the goat-herd caste, which is of low standing.

The troops of the Maharaja Holkar of the day mutinied in 1857, and murdered many British in Indore. The Mhow garrison at that time consisted only of Bengal native troops, with a few British gunners; the native troops mutinied, killed many of their officers and burnt the houses of these, and then joined Holkar's mutinous troops at Indore, while the gunners took refuge in the fort, a small structure which was used at the time as an arsenal. The Indore mutineers eventually joined those around Delhi. The conduct of the Maharaja bore so suspicious an appearance that Colonel Durand, who was head of the civil administration in Central India at the time, refused to hold any confidential intercourse with His Highness until the Indian Government had exonerated him. This the Indian Government did after holding an inquiry; but the British troops always felt resentment against him, as was significantly shown by my regiment on one occasion to be related further on.

It was decided after the Mutiny that the garrison of Mhow should consist of a British cavalry regiment, of two British batteries of horse artillery and a heavy elephant battery, and of

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

one British and two Indian infantry battalions. That was the strength when I joined; but elephant batteries have been abolished since that time. New barracks had recently been built for the troops, but Government does not in India provide officers' quarters. In lieu of these, officers receive a certain house-allowance in addition to their pay, but this allowance was totally inadequate even during my early days in the country, and it has become even more inadequate since that time owing to the great rise that has taken place in prices. The building of bungalows for officers to live in is left to private enterprise; they are set up by traders, European and native, and their rent is fixed by the cantonment authorities. The rent is necessarily low because officers cannot afford to pay more, and the result is that the dwellings in which officers live are almost always overcrowded, and they are insanitary because the landlords cannot make them pay. Moreover, when a case arises of a cantonment being abandoned (which has been of frequent occurrence of recent years) the unfortunate owners of the house property receive no compensation. Under such circumstances it is hardly to be wondered at that there is nowadays a marked reluctance to embark upon the building of houses in cantonments, and that therefore the supply of houses often does not meet the demand. The scarcity of accommodation has been accentuated since 1902, when the concentration of troops in large bodies such as brigades and divisions was initiated, and when the establishment of British officers in Indian regiments was largely augmented.

When I arrived at Mhow there was only one small thatched shanty vacant, and this was allotted to me. It was very much out of repair, and it comprised only a single room, besides the verandah. Bats, rats, cats, squirrels and other living creatures had made their home between the thatched roof and the ceiling-cloth, and the smell that resulted was by no means pleasant. Such conditions are not uncommon to-day in the houses occupied by officers in many cantonments. But I did not mind. Few youngsters are put out by such annoyances, but a good many of them fall ill in consequence of spending their time in such surroundings, and when they do so it is all put down to the climate of the country.

Our colonel in the 95th at this time was a distinguished soldier who had fought in the Crimea and the Indian Mutiny,

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

Colonel J. A. R. Raines, C.B. Military training was practically confined to barrack-square parades and musketry; exercises were never carried out outside of cantonments; parades only took place about twice a week on the average. The only other duty which we officers had to perform, apart from occasional courts-martial or boards, was that of orderly officer, and this only came round about once a fortnight. With so much time as this left on my hands I set myself to explore the neighbourhood, and I bought a horse in hopes of getting some pig-sticking, of which, however, there was little to be had.

It may be of interest to readers to learn the change that took place in the cost of the keep of a horse between the time when I started my military career in India and the date when I left that country finally forty years afterwards. Horses are in Northern India fed on gram, which in 1870 used to be sold at the rate of eighty pounds to the rupee; when I left India it was being sold at the rate of nine pounds to the rupee. The wages of a groom used to come to five rupees a month; when I left India they had risen to eleven or twelve rupees a month. In the old days grass was cut by a woman, usually the groom's wife, who was paid three rupees a month; at the time when I bade good-bye to India grass had become so scarce in the neighbourhood of cantonments that it had to be bought and that its cost came to about fifteen rupees a month for a horse. Thus the charges for keeping a horse had risen from about ten rupees a month to something like forty-five rupees a month within the space of forty years. Everything else, moreover, has greatly gone up—except the pay of the officers and of the rank and file of the army. Nor should it be forgotten that in 1870 the value of the rupee was about two shillings, whereas when I left the country its value had sunk to about one shilling and fourpence.

Before I left India the pay of captains and subalterns respectively was raised by Rs75 and Rs50, and that is the only increase that had taken place in officers' pay since the year 1826. The highest pension which an officer entering the Indian from the British Army could get until 1888 was £365 a year, but in that year Lord Roberts got it fixed at £700 a year after thirty-two years' service. Lord Morley in 1897 fixed the pensions of general officers at £800, £900 and £1,000 a year respectively for major-generals, lieutenant-generals and generals respectively,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

but the establishment only allows for twenty, six and three of them respectively, so that very few can attain these ranks or become entitled to these pensions, while, as everybody knows, the purchasing power of money has much decreased of late years. Think of this ye young men who propose to adopt an Indian military career. Remember also that the housing of officers in India has come to be a scandal and one which may cause untold discomfort to your wives and families should you have such. But this is a digression.

Officers at Mhow found relief from the monotony of cantonment life in shooting, pig-sticking, playing billiards or cards, and reading the papers in a well-appointed mess. But their wives and daughters had no such resources. The only public meeting-place was by the bandstand, where the regimental bands took turns to play two or three evenings a week and where a crowd of officers, ladies and children, the latter accompanied by numerous native servants, used to assemble. The Hindustani with which the ladies and children addressed the servants was of the quaintest description ; but the servants were very acute in understanding it and they managed the spoilt British children with the utmost tenderness and tact.

Anxious as I was to make the acquaintance of natives other than those belonging to the castes that minister to British officers' wants, it was not easy to do so. But I moved about the country-side as much as was practicable, going among the people, entering villages, seeing such objects of interest as were to be found in the vicinity of Mhow, and associating with the natives in so far as this was possible. But it soon became apparent that men of good caste are sensitive and proud, and that in dealing with these the first advance must be made by the European. I was invariably made welcome and was surprised to learn from almost all the natives met with in these parts that they regarded the alien character of their rulers as of great advantage to them, for, said they, this ensured justice to the different indigenous races, religions and castes, a justice which never had existed, and which never could exist, under native rule. So, in their own interest, they desired to be British subjects. That at all events was the view held by the inhabitants of a feudatory state, few of whom were Mahrathas, although there was a Mahratha dynasty set over them.

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

One was impressed with the innate politeness of Indians and noted the gracefulness of some of their social customs. One of these which is particularly attractive is the practice of dispatching *dhalis* to one another on auspicious occasions. Amongst people of good position a *dhali* will usually take the form of a tray carrying fruit, vegetables, sweetmeats, and flowers; to refuse these is regarded as a gross insult, so that they are accepted in a friendly spirit. The coolies who bring the *dhalis* carry back the trays with a letter of thanks which rejoices the heart of the donor, and they receive something for themselves. On Christmas Day I received several *dhalis* and found that the present which I gave the coolies, and the terms in which I acknowledged the offerings, had a good deal to do with making me welcome in the donor's village and amongst the people of his caste. Indians of different castes are normally on quite good terms with each other, even if circumstances prevent their being as friendly as they are with people of their own caste, and there is no reason why British officers and others should not be at least on as intimate terms with Indians as Indians of different castes are with each other.

It should be mentioned here that in those days the existence of British private soldiers in India was an inexpressibly dull one, and that far less was done for their comfort than has come to be the case in more enlightened days. They had no reading-rooms nor places of amusement at their disposal other than the canteen, which was almost bare of furniture and was only open for about two hours daily. The men went there, gulped down their beer, and then went off foraging for such drink as they could buy from natives who hovered just outside cantonment limits, where the military authorities had no control and where Holkar's officials ruled; here an intoxicating beverage, known as "billy stink," was freely consumed. Their successors, better educated and better cared for, no longer indulge in this vile stuff.

One of our men died of *delirium tremens* brought on by an excess of billy stink, all arrangements for his funeral were made, and the cortège arrived at the cemetery; but the padre had not turned up. So the officer in command of the firing party went to the house of that divine, who said that the soldier had virtually committed suicide, that according to the rubric of the Church of England a suicide was not entitled to burial in consecrated

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

ground, and that on that account he (the padre) declined to officiate. The officer reported this to our chief for the time being (Colonel the Hon. E. C. H. Massey, afterwards Lord Clarina), who was a masterful person and who rushed off to the padre and commanded him to come at once to the cemetery and perform the ceremony, or he would be carried there by a file of soldiers and forced to do so. The padre complied under protest and said he would report the incident to the bishop. "You may report it to the devil," roared the colonel, "but perform the service you shall." The service was carried out without further hitch and we never heard what the result was of the padre's report to his bishop.

The hospital building was a two-storied one, only the upper story being used for patients. My colour-sergeant told me that a former padre with a "game" leg had disliked climbing stairs, so, when visiting hospital, it had been his habit to shout from below, "Does anybody up there want spiritual consolation?" If—as was usual—there was no reply he considered his visit paid and he straightway departed. One day I was accompanying the colonel round the barracks of my company, when he heard men's and women's voices singing in the distance. He asked the colour-sergeant, who was a man of dry humour, what the noise was. The non-commissioned officer replied, "Some of the men tell me they go there to sing hymns. But I says it's not for hymns they go, but for hers."

One of our officers who had been promoted from the ranks had at this time been admitted into the Indian Army. There had previously been a prejudice against allowing "rankers" to serve with Indian troops, as only gentlemen are generally suitable. But it depends on what is meant by the word gentleman. This "ranker" was posted to a battalion, composed of Bhils, which was stationed about forty-five miles from Mhow, and I went and paid him a visit. He was a perfect sahib, and just the very man to get on with such people; he had served through the Crimea and the Mutiny and had been promoted for gallantry in the field. Bhils are very timid, very dirty, and much given to strong drink; when out of uniform they wear no clothing except a waist-string and a loin-cloth. They are small but sturdy, very black and very hairy. They shoot accurately with bows and arrows, and they indulge in a curious custom of

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

hunting the wren, which they run down ; the champion who has caught the bird presents it to the officer or other person of rank whom he most respects and is thereupon rewarded with a rupee or two.

They are skilled trackers and faithful to anybody whom they take to, but will do nothing without interpreting the hooting of owls or howling of jackals, which they regard as portents. They are supposed to venerate kine and will not kill these in case any other Hindu is present ; but if no Hindu be present they kill kine readily enough and also eat their flesh. They believe the jackal to be the doctor of the jungle, capable of curing certain other animals—notably the nilgai, which, although really an antelope, they hold to be a member of the bull species. The effects of drink and of the fevers that they greatly suffer from work great havoc in their ranks. The women-kind are old hags by the time they reach the age of twenty, and extremely ugly hags at that. The unwarlike Hindu castes greatly fear the Bhils and will on no account travel through the jungles inhabited by these people without an escort. A Bengali petty official who had been employed among them described them to a friend of his in a letter written in English and this was how he summed them up : “ The Bhil is a black man, but more hairy. When he meets you in his jungle he shoots you in the back with an arrow and throws your body into a ditch. Thus you may know the Bhil.”

It was during my service in Indore that I first came across a gipsy race which goes by the name of Brinjara. These people were at that time the great carriers of grain and of wood of Central India, and their encampments were to be met along all the great trade routes leading through this part of the country. The Brinjaras are a nomad race, and in those days they owned immense herds of cattle and used these as transport animals ; but owing to the development that has since taken place in respect to railways they are nowadays only found in the more remote regions, and, as a consequence of increased cultivation, of the setting apart of much jungle-land as forest preserves, and of the scarcity of grazing grounds, their herds have shrunk. They are held in high favour by those Hindu chiefs who especially venerate kine on account of their possessing such numbers of these sacred beasts. In those far-off days of which I am writing the Brinjaras loved to relate how faithful their caste had been to Lord Lake in his

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

campaigns, and they were especially proud of the fact that, armed only with sword and spear, they had always formed their own escort to convoys, not one of which the enemy had ever captured. My mentioning that an uncle of mine had served under Lat Lik Sahib (as they called Lord Lake) gave me the entrée to local Brinjara society.

They breed a very powerful and ferocious class of dog, like an English lurcher, and I more than once accompanied some of them on a wild-pig hunt on foot. Half a dozen dogs were used, and these were trained to hang on to the pig's ears until their masters arrived with spears. The Brinjaras on these expeditions have no regard for sex; they kill boars and sows indiscriminately and only think of the meal that their quarry is going to provide. They hold festivals peculiar to themselves, and they are very fond of sword dances that are well worth seeing, to special performances of which I was treated.

Early in 1870 the regiment was ordered to Bombay, to remain there till the next trooping season and then to embark for home—a move that I did not like, as city life in India had no attractions for me. My last fortnight at Mhow was spent in bidding good-bye to my native friends in their villages; they prayed me to return, which I promised to do if the gods wished it, a promise that could not be fulfilled for thirty years. The regiment proceeded by march route to Khandwa and there entrained, and a remarkable incident occurred during this march. The Maharaja Tukaji Rao Holkar of Indore arrived unexpectedly in camp one evening and called on the colonel. He requested that the band might play for him, and the necessary order was given. He was much gratified at his wish being complied with, and he sent a present of five hundred rupees to the bandsmen as a recognition. But the bandsmen refused to accept the gift, saying that the Maharaja had murdered Christian men, women and children during the Mutiny, that they had only played for him because the colonel had ordered them to do so, and that they wanted none of his money. So the present had to be returned. It was an awkward incident and I never heard how exactly the matter was dealt with, but Colonel Raines was a man of tact and I have no doubt that he managed to get out of the difficulty without offending Holkar.

The Government of India Commission which, at Holkar's

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

request, had examined into the charges made against him, had acquitted him of blame ; but both British and native officials who were present at the time declared quite openly—and public rumour supported them—that he escaped conviction owing to the great sums that he expended in bribing some members of the Commission. One high British official, who was stated to have accepted a large bribe, was mentioned by name. During the time that I was at Mhow I often heard political officers of the Central India Agency say that there was no doubt whatever as to the truth of the allegation, and, be that as it may, it did seem extraordinary that the Government of India took no notice whatever of grave imputations publicly made against the honour of one of its prominent officials.

Shortly after our arrival in Bombay, H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh passed through the city, and received a most loyal welcome from immense crowds. I was on duty with a guard of honour found by my regiment at the railway station on his departure. The only precaution necessary during the visit was the controlling of the swarms of people who filled the streets, for anti-Government or anti-British riots were unheard of in those days. The city has, however, since the opening of the Suez Canal, become a receptacle for the human scum of Egypt and the Levant, and social conditions amongst at least the lower classes have greatly deteriorated.

Its garrison at this time consisted of one British and of two Bombay Native Infantry battalions. For my regiment the garrison duty proved very light, for it only had to provide a daily guard of one subaltern and twenty rank and file for the powder magazine in the arsenal. The native battalions found small guards for the Government offices, for the Bank of Bombay and for the Treasury. Over Government House the sentries were found from the Governor's Body Guard. These sentries and guards were in reality more for ornament than for use, seeing that the inhabitants of the city were then perfectly peaceable as, outside of Calcutta, there were no agitators in India to stir the natives up. Even in Calcutta the mischief-makers found it almost impossible to rouse the people from their normal condition of "pathetic content."

Those were the days of separate Bengal, Bombay and Madras armies and military administrations. The Presidency of Bengal

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

had, it is true, long ceased to exist as such, and the Bengal Army, so called, was recruited not merely from Bengal proper, Orissa and Behar, but also from the United Provinces of Oudh and Agra and from the Punjab, as well as from the independent state of Nepal which is the home of the Ghurkas. Owing to the Presidency system the Government of India seldom interfered in the administration of the Madras and Bombay Armies. So limited indeed was its authority over them that when it did interfere this often gave rise to conflicts between it and the Presidency Government concerned, conflicts which at times ripened into public scandals and at other times subsided into compromise—according to the particular mood of those concerned in the fray. As was bound to be the case under such a system, any proposal for prompt action, when such was called for by circumstances, took so long to pass through the many channels of communication involved that promptitude was rendered impossible.

Under social and religious obligations, martial races of all castes are compelled to visit their homes at short intervals. But in a country so immense as India such visits meet with almost insuperable difficulties when conditions of general service prevail; for a unit may be stationed fifteen hundred miles from the region in which it happens to recruit. Units were seldom more than one-third of this distance from their proper homes while the Presidency system was in force, and that system was, in consequence, much more popular amongst the native troops than the plan which has since been adopted. Although there were serious objections to the Presidency organization, it had its advantages from the point of view of the native soldier.

While the 95th were quartered in Bombay preparatory to returning home on completion of their term of service in India the Franco-German War broke out, but it had little perceptible effect on the Indian peoples, and the prompt declaration of neutrality by the British Government, followed by the rapid successes of the Germans, put an end to any interest taken in the conflict in India. On my regiment receiving orders to embark for home in the following February I had to decide whether to accompany it or to remain in India. Prospects of promotion were better in the Staff Corps than in the British infantry at that time, and it appeared to offer greater chances of active service. But, owing

Joining Regimental Headquarters at Mhow

to the steady rise of prices, the pay of military officers did not mean out there what it had meant in former times. I had some private means, however, and my only doubt with regard to joining the Staff Corps was that I possessed no Indian interest.

The seats of the mighty were occupied by families which had been connected with the country for generations and which were known as the "county families of India." Their nepotism and jobbery were a by-word even among themselves. It was said with truth that it took five generations to eradicate the influence of a Lieutenant-Governor, and a young man not connected with them commenced his career under considerable disadvantages. I, however, decided to risk the change, and have never regretted doing so. I have found good friends among the county families—men who had the genius of the East and who possessed the qualities necessary in those who are called upon to rule Indian races. I therefore passed the qualifying examination and applied for the Bengal Staff Corps.

CHAPTER VII

EARLY DAYS IN THE INDIAN ARMY

Posted to the Bombay Staff Corps and attached to the Marine Battalion.—The three Staff Corps of those days.—Staff Corps a misnomer.—The varied duties performed by its officers.—The system of promotion.—Its results.—Establishment of British officers allowed to a native regiment.—The seniority of most regimental officers.—General duty wallahs.—Their grievances and their peculiarities.—The bad example they were apt to set.—A case in point.—Officers in civil employ and their return to military duty.—Political officers.—A strange system.—The recruiting of the three Staff Corps after control passed from the East India Company.—Unsatisfactory arrangements as to pensions.—The Marine Battalion : its officers and its rank and file.—A soft job.—Studying the native languages.—The origin of Hindustani and its limited employment outside of certain provinces and towns.—A visit to Poona.—Transferred to the 25th Bombay Light Infantry at Dhulia.—A tour in the Dekkan.—An interesting old lady.—The Duke of Wellington's Indian campaigns.—His knowledge of the people and their peculiarities.—His method of making war.—Gerald Aungier and his plan of self-government for Indians.—The *punchayets* and how Aungier turned them to account.—His plan the right one.—The 25th Bombay Light Infantry.—Advantage of civil officials being honorary members of the regimental messes.—Two distinguished Anglo-Indian families.—Definitely posted to the Bombay Staff Corps.—I accept the officiating adjutancy of the Deoli Irregular Force.

I HAD applied for the Bengal Staff Corps and had asked to be attached to a cavalry regiment which belonged to the Punjab Frontier Force, and Colonel Raines had strongly supported my application for this unit, which was one that was much sought after. But, to my great disappointment, I found myself posted instead to the Bombay Staff Corps on probation. I was attached, to start with, to the Marine Battalion, a regiment of native infantry which was localized in the City of Bombay.

It should be explained that at this time there was a corps of British officers attached to each of the three Presidential Armies, and these were designated respectively the Bengal Staff Corps, the Madras Staff Corps, and the Bombay Staff Corps. Like many of the designations employed by the Government of India, the term "Staff" as applied to these bodies was a misnomer, for the officers composing the three corps possessed

Early Days in the Indian Army

collectively no special qualifications and had undergone no special training as the term implies. But the Government of India considered that officers of the Staff Corps were equally capable of training troops, of leading them in war, or of performing any civil functions which it might allot them to—and this possibly accounts for the corps which they belonged to being known as “Staff Corps.” However that may be, Staff Corps officers were employed sometimes in performing civil duties, and at other times in performing military duties, and they were allowed to change their *métier* from one type of service to the other at will or when it suited Government that they should do so.

The military duties that were allotted to Staff Corps officers comprised the filling of half the proper military staff appointments in the country (the other half were filled by officers of British corps), as well as all appointments in the Pay Department, the Transport Department and the Commissariat Department of their respective armies—this in addition to officering the various Indian units included in those armies. The civil duties which military officers were called on to perform were multifarious, and were much better paid than were military appointments. Such officers enjoyed a virtual monopoly of what was called the Political Department, and they were largely made use of in the provinces that were not assigned exclusively to the Indian Civil Service.

The military promotion of Staff Corps officers went on just the same whether they were in civil or were in military employ, and it was customary for regiments, brigades, divisions and even armies in the field to be commanded by soldiers who had passed the best part of their lives as civilians. It was an arrangement which facilitated a nepotism and jobbery such as has never been equalled anywhere else in the world. It did produce some officers of great distinction both as warriors and as administrators, but they were exceptional men who would have risen in any walk of life. Their success camouflaged the many who brought disgrace in a military sense on the British arms, and who in a civil capacity committed blunders that were costly to Government and were injurious, and even fatal, to thousands of unfortunate Asiatics, at whose expense they were sent simultaneously to learn their work and to do that work.

Each native infantry regiment was supposed to have the

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

following establishment of British officers : a Brevet Colonel or a Lieutenant-Colonel in command, a Lieutenant-Colonel or Major as second-in-command, a Major as wing commander, two Lieutenants as wing subalterns, a Captain or a Lieutenant as Adjutant, and a Captain or Lieutenant as Quartermaster ; the nomenclature in the case of regimental appointments differed slightly in the cavalry from that in the infantry. But, as might have been foreseen under the system of promotion that was in force, regimental promotion was bound to run intermittently, the more so as there was no limit of time with regard to the retention of regimental commands. At one time there would be a superfluity of officers of senior rank in a regiment, at other times there would be an excess of juniors. At the date of my arrival in India the former of the two situations prevailed. There were such swarms of senior officers on the Staff Corps lists that, although regimental commanders and seconds-in-command and wing commanders in almost every corps were Brevet Colonels or Lieutenant-Colonels, and although many wing subalterns were in practice Majors, there were also numbers of senior officers for whom no military employment could be found. Only the most efficient, or else those who possessed interest, were in fact employed. The rest were put on what was humorously called "general duty"—which meant that they did nothing at all, but for such odd special jobs as could occasionally be found for them to occupy themselves with.

All the senior officers then serving in the Staff Corps had been taken over from the East India Company when the great change took place after the Mutiny, and the Government of India had then given them a guarantee that they would be employed until they had completed thirty-eight years' service and had, in consequence, become entitled to a pension amounting to about £1,120 a year. So long as officers were employed they not only got the pay of their rank, but they also received the pay of their regimental appointment. Officers when placed on "general duty," however, got only the pay of their rank, as they held no regimental appointment ; and the result was that they lost nearly half their income, which they not unnaturally regarded as a gross breach of its agreement on the part of the Government of India. These "general duty wallahs" were, for the most part, men who were worn out by long service in a tropical climate or

Early Days in the Indian Army

as a consequence of good living ; many of them were corpulent and scant of breath, while all of them were intensely discontented at the way they had been treated. They would willingly have retired if the Government had only offered them a gratuity commensurate with their prospect of the large pension which they would in due course become entitled to if they lived long enough, and had the Government so acted an immense sum of money would have been saved to the State. But the powers that be let them hang on.

Numbers of these old gentlemen were to be found in the military stations scattered about India, grumbling and disgusted. They provided living examples of the stupidity of those administrators who had brought the "general duty" system into being, and who were retaining these veterans doing nothing for years and drawing their pay, when the whole difficulty might have been got over to the advantage of all concerned. The "general duty wallahs" did not provide good examples for junior officers, who looked upon them as a standing joke. Time and a reorganization ended them, but not before a considerable number of them had done serious disservice to Government by ignoring its orders which forbade British officers belonging to the Indian army to engage in missionary work amongst the natives, and by embarking on a proselytizing campaign with more zeal than discretion.

Others of these old unemployed officers manifested different peculiarities. There was, for instance, one of them who had greatly distinguished himself during the Mutiny and whom I got to know. It was said of him that he read nothing but the "Almanach des Gourmands" and that he consumed an enormous quantity of Ind, Coope and Co.'s pale ale daily ; he was, indeed, credited with putting away twelve pints of that beverage at his breakfast alone, regardless of the heat of the weather. On one occasion, when a general officer had promised to address the teetotal society of a British regiment but had found himself unable to carry out his promise owing to unforeseen circumstances, this gallant but bibulous old "general duty wallah" was directed to act as substitute ; the general at the same time gave the substitute the purport of the speech that he wished made. The teetotallers were duly paraded before the substitute, who addressed them as follows : "You miserable, white-livered,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

pale-faced, snivelling skimshankers, etc., etc. Oh ! I forgot. That isn't what the General told me to say, but it's what I think of you. Now I'll say what I was told to say," and he made a most appropriate and eloquent speech on the virtues and the advantages of temperance.

On completion of two years with an Indian regiment, officers were in those days eligible for selection to all the departments of the State, after passing an easy qualifying examination ; but those chosen invariably had the interest of some high civil official at their back. Of all the civil departments the Political Department was the *crème de la crème*. Soldiers who secured admission to this were given precedence and pay far in advance of what they could hope for in the army, while officers who joined other civil departments got higher pay than they would have got with their regiments, if not so high as that received in the Political Department. When any of these officers felt so disposed, they were allowed to rejoin their regiments ; but they seldom did so unless they would obtain command, or were in hopes of obtaining yet higher command. The few who returned to military duty in the junior ranks generally did so because they had muddled their civilian job. Those who returned to command regiments often superseded officers who had long been serving in these, which naturally caused dissatisfaction ; they had almost invariably forgotten what little military knowledge they had ever possessed and had then to be dry-nursed by the very men whom they had superseded.

Of all the military men in civil departments, those found in the Political Department were the most unpopular. That department was in those days entirely recruited from young military officers, but the system has since been changed, and the department is now recruited equally from the Indian Civil Service. Political officers were attached to all armies in the field and they were then always in charge of the Intelligence Department. As they were not under the officers commanding the armies, but communicated direct with the Government, they were virtually in direct, if irresponsible, control of the operations. As could only be expected under such a system, disasters to the British armies were of frequent occurrence, and the military were always held responsible for these. It is obvious that if men with no technical knowledge are pitch-forked into appointments where

Early Days in the Indian Army

such knowledge is especially necessary, both the Government and those of its subjects with whom these impostors have to deal, suffer. So glaring were the blunders during the Afghan Campaign of 1878-9 that the late Sir Alfred Lyall, then Secretary to the Government in the Foreign Department, insisted on a reform which placed Political officers attached to forces in the field on the staff of their commanders.

Nowadays, military officers in civil employ are, after ten years in it, precluded from returning to military duty, although their promotion continues up to, and inclusive of, the rank of lieutenant-colonel without passing the usual examinations. Since that change was made, the ill-feeling which formerly existed between these military-civilians and the genuine military officers has largely disappeared. Lord Kitchener when Commander-in-Chief tried to get the arrangement altered under which military promotion goes on for performing civilian duties. But, although supported by the Government of India, he was over-ruled by the Secretary of State at home.

After the transfer of the control of India to the Crown, the three Staff Corps came to be recruited from British regiments serving in the country. Candidates had to fulfil the following conditions : to be of less than seven years' service, to pass an easy test in Hindustani, to undergo a year's probation in an Indian regiment, and to pass an examination in the interior economy of Indian units and in Indian military law. After that they were definitely transferred to one of the Staff Corps as lieutenants from the date on which their period of probation had commenced. To induce candidates to join the Staff Corps, any purchase officers who were admitted while they had less than four years' service were repaid the value of the commissions. But although the Staff Corps officers who were recruited from British regiments came under the same rules as regards promotion as those who had been taken over from the East India Company, the regulations as regards their pensions placed them in a much more unfavourable position. Those regulations were, moreover, so complicated that they were almost incomprehensible to anybody outside the Pay Department ; few youngsters entering the Staff Corps gave the subject a thought and most of them lived to regret their carelessness in the matter later on.

The Marine Battalion to which I was attached at the outset

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

was so designated because it had, before the abolition of the Indian Navy, been a battalion of Marines, and it still had a few detachments in the Persian Gulf, commanded by non-commissioned officers. Its British officers were middle-aged men and old men who had served in the unit for years, and whose only ambition was to continue doing so till qualified to retire on pension. They knew no vernacular tongues except Hindustani, and this only as it is spoken by the uneducated classes. The native ranks of the battalion were recruited from the low-caste Hindus and Hindu-Musalmans who inhabit the hot plain immediately south of the city of Bombay. They were of poor physique—jet-black little men, with no martial spirit and in many cases old and worn out. They spoke Tamil, but most of the native officers and some of the non-commissioned officers knew Hindustani of a sort and were used by British officers as interpreters. My only duties were attending a couple of battalion parades weekly and keeping the accounts of my wing, so I had plenty of leisure and employed this largely in the study of Persian and Hindi, without knowing which it is impossible to speak Hindustani correctly. It may be mentioned that the purity of the Hindustani spoken throughout the peninsula decreases the further the locality is from those provinces which constituted the focus of the Mogul Empire, and the numbers of the people who make use of it in other parts of India is comparatively small. It has at no time been a *lingua franca* generally in use as a means of intercourse by the various races who inhabit the land. No *lingua franca* indeed exists. South of the Narbada, and also in regions lying east of Benares, Hindustani is only spoken by a minority of the inhabitants of a few towns.

Service in the Marine Battalion and in the city of Bombay was by no means to my liking, so I seized an early opportunity to go up to Poona, where the headquarters of the Bombay Army were located, to interview the Adjutant-General and to ask him to transfer me to some regiment quartered as far to the north as possible. I did not ask to be posted to a cavalry regiment, which I would have much preferred, as I was aware that so many candidates for that arm who belonged to the "county families" already had their names down that I would stand no chance. The Adjutant-General received me very kindly and promised to do what he could to meet my wishes.

Early Days in the Indian Army

The 95th left for home as arranged, and I bade them good-bye with the greatest regret. Shortly after their departure I was transferred to the 25th Bombay Native Light Infantry stationed at Dhulia, a small town which was the headquarters of a civil district in the province of Khandesh. I was granted two months' leave before joining my new corps and these were spent in touring through the Dekkan, visiting places of interest, and studying the ways of the people; the history of the Duke of Wellington's Indian career and other books were taken as companions. One town that I passed through was Satara, and there an interesting Afghani resided at the time.

She belonged to the royal Durani clan and was a cousin of Dost Mahomed Khan, the Amir of Afghanistan, who had in 1849 sent an Afghan contingent of three thousand men under the command of one of his sons to assist the Sikhs. On the occasion of the complete defeat of the latter at the battle of Chilianwallah the Afghans lost heavily; those who escaped fled to their own country and were pursued as far as the entrance of the Khyber pass by a British force, which halted there for some time awaiting further orders. During the halt a Major Maughan of the East India Company's Service met and secretly married this lady according to Musalman rites, she being then quite young. The British Force dispersed soon after their union, and she remained with her own people, while Major Maughan shortly afterwards became Military Secretary to General Sir Charles Napier, Governor of Sind, whose headquarters were at Karachi. When his young Afghani wife heard that he was there she, at the risk of her life, fled from her home and joined him, making the long, dangerous and arduous journey through the Salt Range to the Indus near Multan on a mule, accompanied only by a muleteer and a slave boy. On her arrival at Karachi the pair were married according to the rites of the Church of England, and they lived together happily till the death of Major, then Colonel, Maughan eleven years afterwards, when Mrs. Maughan married a Mr. O'Kearney, whom she accompanied to the Dekkan, and on her second husband's death soon afterwards she made her home at Satara, where she was living when I left India. She had enjoyed the friendship and respect of Sir Charles Napier, of Sir Henry Lawrence, and of many other celebrated Indian officials.

The Duke of Wellington's (then Sir Arthur Wellesley)

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

campaign against the Maharathas, from his capture of Poona up to their final defeat at Assaye, is well deserving of study. His methods of conducting war during this struggle were very similar to those which he employed so successfully in his operations on a larger scale in Europe. Some of the forts which he reduced, at a time when no high explosives existed, were most formidable, and he nevertheless took them by *coup de main*. This goes to show what excellent discipline he maintained, and how great were the skill and the bravery of his officers and men, British and native—the latter always being by far the more numerous in Indian wars. The ancient forts in India are for the most part built near the summits of steep hills and have towns clustered round their bases. The town is generally encircled by a wall, with towers or semi-circular bastions at intervals; so that the town has to be captured before the fort can be attacked.

Although the Duke of Wellington only served for about eight years in India, his wonderful acumen and his rare powers of observation enabled him to acquire, even within that limited space of time, a thorough knowledge of the characteristics of its people, and to gain their esteem and respect. A study of his Indian career, thus early in mine, taught me much that was useful concerning Indian psychology and with regard to how I ought to comport myself in my relations with the natives. Although many changes were to take place before I finally left the country, I have never found reason to deviate from the attitude taken up during those early days. The Duke is emphatic in denouncing the folly of showing timidity, either openly or in secret, when dealing with Indian antagonists, and the truth of this was amply illustrated by the results of the bold strategy and tactics which he employed in his campaigns against vastly superior forces. The rapid successes which he secured by these methods had the effect of converting secret enemies into friends and of preventing the organization of more wide-spread hostile combinations against the government that he served. The battle of Assaye, considered by the Duke to have been the hardest that he fought in India, coupled with the military policy of which it was the sequel, conclusively prove that the natives of India are idealists who are ruled by affection or respect or fear, but that this affection and respect can only be gained by those who treat them with sympathy, understanding and justice.

Early Days in the Indian Army

I also read the life of another great Anglo-Indian official at this time, to wit, Gerald Aungier who was Governor of Bombay at a date when British territory only consisted of the island and a strip of mainland adjacent to it. He was of an independent disposition and would not be bullied by his masters in London, the East India Company. He considered that, to do justice to the natives and so as to preserve orderly conditions, a form of local self-government must be conferred on them, and he realized that if self-government was to function efficiently it must be such as to be acceptable to the people and be adapted to their customs and caste-organization. Ever since the dawn of history each caste had enjoyed a modified autonomy. Its internal affairs had been wholly, and its relations with other castes and with the rulers of the land had been largely, conducted by its *punchayet* or caste council. The members of these *punchayets* were selected for life by methods which varied in the different castes ; but history records that they seldom betrayed their trust and that they often sacrificed their lives rather than do so. There have been many Indian Hampdens amongst them.

Aungier instituted his form of self-government in 1685. Under it each caste continued to select the members of its *punchayet* according to ancient custom, but he laid down that their term of office was only to last one or two years. He did not fall into the error of forcing an exotic electoral system upon the people under his sway, for he knew that to do so would be unworkable and would be unjust. He laid upon the members of the *punchayets* certain duties and certain responsibilities, which he legalized and for the efficient performance of which he promised that they would be suitably rewarded. He directed the *punchayets* of all the castes in the territory under his control to meet in conclave periodically ; they were collectively to represent the wishes and the grievances of the population as a whole to the Governor in Council, and were to arbitrate in respect to controversies between different castes ; he further directed the *punchayet* of each caste to meet when necessary and to arbitrate in respect to controversies within the caste.

He invested the *punchayets* with the power, both in the case of inter-caste and of caste troubles, to inflict certain punishments, including fines, for the recovery of which they were responsible ; but if the parties concerned did not agree to the

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

term of the settlement they were allowed to appeal to the Government law courts. Litigation, which is the curse of British rule in India, was by this means kept within reasonable limits, as was that meddling of the bureaucracy (mostly composed of natives of certain special castes) in the daily life of the people, which has proved so mischievous. Aungier thus—two and a half centuries ago—solved the problem of self-government in India, a problem full of difficulties when the question has to be applied to so diversified a population. He did so in a way that was equally beneficial to India and to England, and that was most popular amongst all races and castes in the country, and amongst all classes—except the lawyers. *Punchayets* still deal with certain social and religious matters, but the policy of the British since Aungier's time has been to restrict their power. It is my firm belief that improvement in the condition of the people of India can only be carried out if caste *punchayets* and village communities be made the basis of such self-government as is introduced, for the village organization and the *punchayet*, both of them institutions dating back to remote times, have proved the only durable institutions in this vast region.

On joining my new regiment I found that an officer who had passed all his service in the Police had been brought in as commandant some six months before I arrived. He knew nothing whatever about military matters, even about so simple a matter as infantry drill, and he was quite unable to maintain a proper discipline. The condition of the regiment forcibly brought home to me the absurdity of a system that allowed men who had passed their lives in civil employment being placed in charge of troops. The native rank-and-file were of somewhat better physique than had been those of the Marine Battalion, but their martial spirit appeared to be no greater, although the regiment had enjoyed a high reputation for valour in former times. It was impossible to take pride in such a corps, although I did my best to do so while attached to it. Fortunately there was a battalion of armed police in the station composed of Bhils, and, as I was anxious to improve myself in the Hindi which they spoke, I made a practice of frequently conversing with some of them.

A native regiment was at this time stationed at the headquarters of almost every civil district throughout the country,

Early Days in the Indian Army

and the civil officials were always made honorary members of the mess ; thus the military and the civilians came to be in close touch with one another, which was advantageous to both, and also to the public service. I soon got to know all the civilian officials of the Dhulia district. The commandant of the Police Battalion was a Major Probyn, a relative of General Sir Dighton Probyn, while the superintendent of the district police was a Major Birdwood, whose nephew Sir W. Birdwood has so greatly distinguished himself during the World War. Both the Probyns and the Birdwoods are old Anglo-Indian families which, like so many of their class, have rendered splendid service to the Empire both in civil and in military capacities.

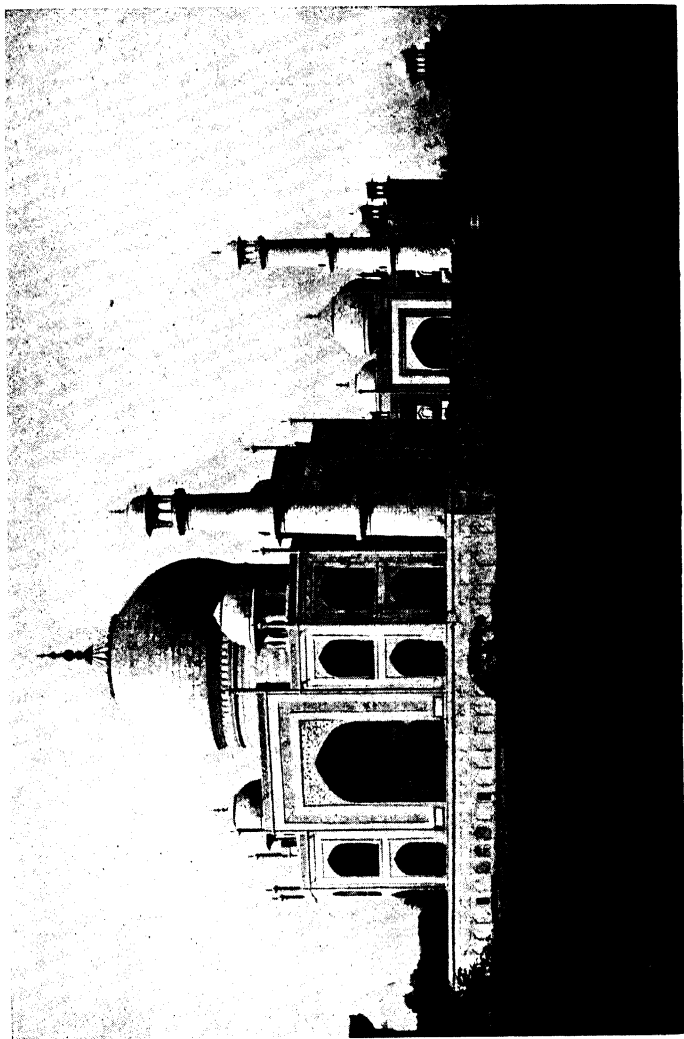
I completed my year of probation in the Bombay Army while serving with the 25th Bombay Light Infantry, and was reported as qualified for service with Indian troops. Having passed the necessary examination in interior economy and law, I was thereupon gazetted to the Bombay Staff Corps as a lieutenant. Shortly afterwards I quite unexpectedly received a telegram from the Military Secretary to the Governor-General, Lord Mayo, offering me the adjutancy of the Deoli Irregular Force, a local corps in Rajputana, which I gladly accepted ; I have never discovered to whom I owe this. So I proceeded by rail to Agra, which was the station that was nearest to Deoli, for in those days there were no railways as yet traversing Rajputana.

CHAPTER VIII

WITH THE DEOLI IRREGULAR FORCE

Agra.—The dāk bungalows of India and their ways.—The Taj.—I proceed to Jaipur by *shigram* dāk.—Travelling by such means.—A stop at Bharatpur and a friendly khansamah.—Rajput hospitality to travellers.—Put up with the Political Resident at Jaipur.—Make the acquaintance of Maharaja Siwaie Ram Singh, ruler of the Jaipur state.—An indiscretion on the part of a Governor-General's lady.—From Jaipur to Deoli.—The Hindus and the aborigines of India.—The Minas of Rajputana.—Their mode of life before the creation of the Deoli Irregular Force.—Constitution of this force after the Mutiny.—The Rajputs and military service.—The cavalry squadron found from the Punjab.—Sirdar Milkha Singh.—His record when fighting for the Sikhs.—His conduct towards distinguished British prisoners.—His sons join the British native forces.—His conduct during the Mutiny.—His squadron transferred to the Deoli Irregular Force.—Services of his family and descendants.—The infantry battalion is recruited from the Minas.—Effect of this on their behaviour.—Colonel Macdonald, the first commandant.—His previous record.—His eccentricities and mode of life.—His bagpipe band.—His special piper.—The house that he built, and his garden.—The Minas delight in these.—Douching the Mina ladies.—The importance of the British in India devising amusements for the villagers.—My introduction to Colonel Macdonald.—His tomb all ready-prepared in the cemetery.—How the doctor was deified.—The Colonel's end.—My parting with him at Ajmir.—Sir Claude Macdonald.—The Deoli Irregular Force in my time.—How Colonel Macdonald induced the Minas to enlist.—A Mina Robin Hood and how his help was secured.—Some of his characteristics.—Brahmin officers with the battalion.—The record of Muthura, one of them.—My chief friends among the native officers.—A pig-sticker.—A test of bone in a horse.—The regiment of Bengal Cavalry in Deoli.—Deoli as a station.—A shooting expedition.—Offered the adjutancy of the Merwara Battalion at Ajmir.—My ride to my new station.

I ARRIVED at Agra early in March, 1871, and put up at the dāk bungalow, which was an unusually large and good one. There were few hotels in India in those days except at the Presidency towns and at hill stations, and the local governments elsewhere maintained these rest-houses for the accommodation of European travellers. They were not ideal houses of call, for the accommodation was limited to twenty-four hours, after which a traveller had to vacate if the rooms were required by a newer arrival. They were, and are still, dirty and badly furnished, and the food is bad. It usually takes the form



THE TAJ MAHAL.

[To face p. 89.

With the Deoli Irregular Force

of grilled or curried fowl (known as " sudden death "), the carcase of a cunningly voracious, unclean-feeding, skinny, tough biped, which has been picking up its scanty living from the refuse of compounds and adjacent highways. During the last half-century, however, hotels have replaced dāk bungalows in almost all large cantonments and civil stations.

I had no time to visit all the places of interest at Agra and in the vicinity, although I have frequently done so in later years, and have hunted the boar round Methura, a few miles off, the best tract in India for that splendid form of sport. The place to see was, of course, the Taj Mahal, built by Shah Jehan as a mausoleum for his favourite Empress. It is situated on the left bank of the Jamna, three miles from the city, and is the most delicate and elegant tribute, and stands for the greatest compliment, that has ever been paid to a woman. Its glorious design, its exquisite tracery and its perfection in all respects are well known.

The journey to Deoli from Agra could be covered in a few days, for the Postal Department maintained a *shigram* dāk* to Ajmir, which passed Jaipur, from which point an unbridged track branched off to my destination. A *shigram* is a cab of the " four wheeler " type, arranged to carry two passengers inside, lying down ; it is drawn by a pair of ponies at a rate of about six miles an hour, allowing for the time taken to change at the stages. Those used are generally ancient, ramshackle vehicles, and the ponies are half-starved, stunted, untrained little animals, covered with sores from the ill-fitting harness which, never cleaned nor softened, cuts like a knife. They are ill-treated from the day they are foaled till death releases them ; they hate mankind ; they hate each other ; they kick, squeal and bite to prevent being harnessed, and when harnessed they can only be induced to start after having been brutally whacked into a semblance of obedience.

There was no difficulty in getting a *shigram* to take me the one hundred and sixty miles to Jaipur, but as I had arranged for a horse dāk from there to Deoli to enable me to ride through in a day, I had to wait at Agra till this was ready, which meant a delay of about ten days. I started in a dilapidated vehicle, with my baggage and servants on top, and we were much delayed

* Dāk means relays of animals or coolies at convenient distances apart.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

en route by strings of bullock-carts. The patient, bell-tinkling cattle crawl unguided along the road, while their drivers, as is customary with their kind, squat muffled up and fast asleep on the loads.

On arriving at the town of Bharatpur, some thirty miles from Agra, I halted at the State dāk bungalow for luncheon, where the khansamah in charge regarded himself as the Maharaja's representative. He was the pink of politeness, and received me with profound salaams, saying—a customary formality—that His Highness awaited news of my health, had given orders for a report regarding this to be made to him at once, and had directed that the comfort of his auspicious guest should be attended to and that his every wish was to be anticipated. I discovered from his hyperbolic language (he spoke the most refined Urdu) that all European visitors were received as State guests. He ushered me into the public room, which was surrounded by cupboards thrown open for my inspection; these contained supplies of wine, whisky, beer, liqueurs, and all sorts of tinned foods. The place, indeed, resembled a wine and provision store. He inquired what I would like for luncheon, recommending ham, *sas-sit* (sausage), the customary curried fowl, and champagne, which, like all natives, he called “simkin.” While luncheon was being got ready I went to see the mud ramparts of Bharatpur, before which Lord Lake's troops were three times repulsed in olden days. As I left the bungalow I heard the shrieks of my “curry,” which was having its throat cut.

On my departure I offered “baksheesh” to the khansamah for himself and for the other servants. This he courteously but firmly refused, saying that he and they were slaves of my nobility, and that they were intensely grateful for the honour I, a nourisher of the poor, had conferred on them by permitting such humble individuals to attend on me. For that act of kindness, they would, he declared, as in duty bound pray to God night and day to grant me long life and to make me a Lat Sahib. The khansamah was a strikingly handsome old man, and had the dignified manners of a courtier which were then possessed by most good servants, a class which had become almost extinct by the time I left India. European visitors to Rajputana were few in those days and were mostly Government officials on tour. When railways spread over the province and brought in

With the Deoli Irregular Force

visitors in large numbers, among whom were many disreputable characters, the hospitable custom of receiving them indiscriminately as State guests ceased.

On my arrival at Jaipur, although personally unknown to the political Resident, I, in accordance with customary Anglo-Indian hospitality, received an invitation from him to be his guest during my stay. This I gladly accepted. Major Bradford was officiating in the appointment and had quite recently taken it up; he was a member of a family long connected with the Madras Presidency and had been a renowned big game hunter up to a few years before, when he had lost an arm in an encounter with a tiger wounded by him. He was an able officer and a courteous gentleman, who knew Rajputana and Central India well, and who was most popular amongst the people of those provinces, especially with their chiefs and nobles. He subsequently became Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana and was always a good friend to me. At a later date he came to be well known in London as Colonel Sir E. Bradford, Chief Commissioner of Police.

While staying with him I met Maharaja Siwaie Ram Singh, the ruling chief of the Jaipur state, a descendant of the distinguished astronomer, Raja Siwaie Jai Singh, who had ascended the *gaddi* (throne) in 1693. Having read about the astronomer, I was in a position to talk about him to Ram Singh and we became great friends. He invited me to visit him at Jaipur whenever I liked, which I often subsequently did up to the time of his death ten years later. He was a shrewd, well-educated prince although his knowledge of English was nil. He did much to improve his capital by establishing schools, a hospital, a museum, and other public buildings, by providing it with a good water-supply, and by benefiting it in other ways, such as the laying out of beautiful public parks and horticultural gardens. He was the first feudatory chief of Rajputana to interest himself in such matters, and his example was soon followed by most of the others. The Governor-General and Lady Mayo had been at Jaipur shortly before I arrived there and, at a ball given in their honour, Lady Mayo had danced with the Maharaja. This innovation, considered unwise by the British officials and resented by Indian society, caused a sensation. English ladies were for a long time afterwards more

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

rigidly excluded than ever from the zenanas of important feudatory chiefs of the province.

After a few days' stay at Jaipur I left early one morning for Deoli and reached my destination in time for dinner. The country traversed is the territory of feudatory states in which game of all kinds is strictly preserved, and everywhere were to be seen traces of wild pig, crowds of antelopes grazing peacefully, pea-fowl and other sacred birds in immense numbers, and large families of monkeys, all so tame that they took very little notice of me as I rode by. I calculated that about half the labour of the villagers must consist of driving all these wild things from their crops. Villagers in British territory are happier in this respect, for game is not preserved and is consequently much less abundant.

Deoli is situated in the south-western corner of the British district of Ajmir, in what was then a forest region, most of the inhabitants of which are Minas, who in race, characteristics and language are very similar to Bhils. The Hindu scriptures designate aborigines who have not accepted Hinduism (there are some 60,000,000 spread throughout India) as *chandala* or unclean, and regard them as beasts rather than human beings. The instructions contained in the Hindu scripture which deals with ceremonial law, ordain that "their abodes shall be out of towns; their sole property shall consist of dogs and asses;* their only clothes shall be those left by the dead; their ornaments shall be rusty iron; they shall wander from place to place; no respectable men, i.e., Hindu, shall hold intercourse with them; they shall perform the duty of executioner in the case of criminals condemned to death by the Raja, for which duty they may retain the clothes and ornaments of those executed; the *chandala* can never be released from bondage though he be emancipated by his master, for how can he whom the Creator has destined to be the slave of Brahmins ever be relieved of his destiny by man."

In most feudatory states ruled by Hindu dynasties these miserable people are forced to pay Hindu landlords such high rents that they are reduced to serfdom, although they consider themselves the rightful owners of the land. The Minas of Rajputana are, with the exception of a few in the Ajmir district and

* Dogs and asses are considered the most unclean of all living things.

With the Deoli Irregular Force

in the Musalman state of Tonk, subjects of Hindu rulers. They remind one another of their primeval right to the soil by the following aphorism: "The Raja is the proprietor of his share, I am the proprietor of the land." Aborigines in Rajputana are better treated by their Hindu rulers than those in other parts of India, and Rajput chiefs admit the primeval title of the aborigines to the land in various ways. As an example of this it may be mentioned that when a new ruler of the Udaipur state is installed, the *tilok* or symbol of sovereignty (a small red spot placed on the forehead) is applied by a Bhil from blood taken from his toe, and in the case of a ruler of the Jodhpur state this ceremony is similarly performed by a Mina. This shows that these Hindu princes of the first rank consider their title to sovereignty incomplete until the original lord of the soil acknowledges it by shedding his blood for them.

The Minas in the vicinity of Deoli were for years in a state of simmering rebellion against their Rajput lords. They subsisted on plundering Hindus, and by cultivating insignificant patches of land hidden away in forest regions that were most difficult of access. When matters were being settled after the Mutiny the need of some form of troops to maintain order in this part of the world was realized, and the hope was also at the same time entertained that, if Minas were enlisted and disciplined, the effect would tend towards pacifying and civilizing these aborigines dwelling in out-of-the-way parts of Rajputana. The necessity of organizing a special force having been recognized, it was decided that this should be a local corps under the Foreign Department, to consist of a squadron of cavalry and a battalion of infantry. It was enlisted for local service in Rajputana and did not form part of the regular army until Lord Kitchener, under his reorganization scheme, disbanded the squadron and converted the battalion into a regular battalion as the 43rd Deoli Infantry.*

It was arranged that the squadron should consist of Sikhs from the Punjab, and one became available for the purpose on the disbandment of the Central India Field Force. The history of this Squadron and its Sikh commander is remarkable. The commander's name was Sirdar Milkha Singh. His

* It has disappeared under the latest Indian reorganization scheme.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

father, Sirdar Bhag Singh, had held the *jagirdarship** of a district in the Jhelam province of the Punjab during the reign of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh; he was killed in battle against the Afghans, and Milkha Singh succeeded to the family estate. After it had been in his possession for some time a quarrel arose with other claimants, relatives of his who put forward pretensions to a prior right to it, so the Maharaja settled the matter by confiscating it, although it had been long in the possession of the family. But on doing so, the Maharaja, out of respect to the memory of Sirdar Bhag Singh who had been a good soldier, appointed Sirdar Milkha Singh to be a subadar (captain) in one of the Sikh regiments of infantry, of which he subsequently became adjutant. During the early years of Milkha Singh's service his regiment was engaged in many victorious battles in the long war with the Afghans, and when war with the British broke out it fought on the losing side, suffering defeat at Mudki, Ferozeshah and Sobraon. At Sobraon it was reduced to two hundred men, of whom Milkha Singh was in command, and it held its post till half of them were killed.

During the second Sikh war in 1848, Milkha Singh joined the force raised by Sirdar Chattar Singh to fight the British, and he was present on the occasion of the night attack on the British Agency at Peshawar, when Brigadier-General Sir G. Lawrence and many British officers, ladies and children were made prisoners by the Sikhs. He became their jailer till they were released after five months' captivity. He was extremely kind to the prisoners during this time and their comfort was his constant care.

After the annexation of the Punjab to the Indian Empire, Milkha Singh went to live in his village home, and two of his sons enlisted in the 1st Regiment of Infantry of the newly-formed Punjab Frontier Force. The younger of them was subsequently killed in action against the Kohat Pass Afridis, and the elder, having been promoted to the rank of jemadar (lieutenant), was killed in the assault of Delhi in 1857, when gallantly leading his men; his commanding officer, Colonel

* Under native rule *jagir* is the tenure under which the revenue of a certain tract is given over by the ruler to an individual, together with the requisite powers to enable him to collect it and carry on the administration. This person is called its *jagirdar*. The position of *jagirdar* is usually hereditary.

With the Deoli Irregular Force

Coke, recorded that had he lived he would have recommended him for the Indian Order of Merit and for promotion. In those days the Indian Order of Merit corresponded to the Victoria Cross, for which Indians were not then eligible.

On the outbreak of the Mutiny Sir John Lawrence (afterwards Lord Lawrence, Governor-General of India, Sir George's brother), who was Governor of the Punjab, summoned Milkha Singh and said: "Milkha Singh! I will make you a risaldar (captain of cavalry) if you will serve the Government and will bring one hundred men well-mounted, armed and fit for service with you." The old warrior at once accepted this offer, had his men ready in twenty days and commenced his march to join a field force under General Honer, then operating in Rajputana against the rebel army under Tantia Topi, and he was subsequently engaged in many actions with the rebels, in which he and his men greatly distinguished themselves. When this field force was broken up on the complete overthrow of the mutineers, General Honer placed on record that Sirdar Milkha Singh was on all occasions "ready in the saddle at a moment's warning, obedient, loyal, true, and very active and energetic." He and his men were then transferred to the Deoli Irregular Force, the squadron of which he was commanding as risaldar-major when I joined.

He was then over seventy years of age, but remained bright, active and full of spirit, a dignified, handsome and most gentlemanly old man. He and I very soon became fast friends. It was one of my greatest pleasures to pay him visits, to go out riding with him and to listen to his stories of the vicissitudes of his adventurous life, and of his gallant race, in whose history, religion and habits of thought he initiated me. Two of his sons and two of his grandsons were then serving in the squadron, and he had nine grandsons in his village home, still too young to serve, of whom he habitually remarked: "When they arrive at a proper age they will become soldiers who will fight with their lives and substance for the British Raj (Government)." And the gallant old gentleman's prediction was to come true in due course. His family have served the Government well; over twenty-five descendants of Sirdar Bhag Singh have served in the Deoli Irregular Force Squadron, and thirteen of Milkha Singh's direct descendants are now doing so in different branches

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

of the regular army. Some of them have attained the highest positions till recently open to Indians. They are my friends to-day, and the more so because they know the regard and respect in which I held their ancestor, whose memory they venerate. One of them, Subadar-Major Balwart Singh, of the 23rd Sikh Pioneers, was murdered at Aden where his regiment was quartered, and Sirdar Milkha Singh's great grandson, Subadar Major Sirdar Thakur Singh, M.C., of the 47th Sikh Infantry, who came here with the Indian Peace Contingent, visited me frequently during his stay in London.

It is no wonder that, when such splendid soldiers and such gallant services are ignored, and when the recently sanctioned King's commissions are bestowed upon youths of unwarlike Bengali scribe caste or upon rich scions of feudatory chiefs' families, the Indian Army thinks "the lion's kill goes to make the jackals' feast" and becomes restless and dissatisfied. When I think of what is now being done in India I see nothing but disaster in the future for the country to whose welfare I devoted the best years of my life.

It was decided that the infantry battalion of the Deoli Irregular Force should be recruited from the Minas in whose country Deoli is situated, and this was the main reason for its selection as site for the new cantonment. These Minas were mostly subjects of Rajput feudatory states, whose Hindu rulers oppressed them and treated them with contumely; their condition was deplorable and they lived in a state of simmering rebellion. The only land they were allowed to occupy was unproductive, they were forced to pay excessive taxes, and the consequence was that they engaged only to a limited extent in agriculture and that their chief means of subsistence came to be robbery under arms. When I left India their habits had changed; they had come to be either peaceful agriculturists or loyal soldiers, and this satisfactory state of affairs had been brought about, partly by the spirit of discipline and of loyalty spread among them owing to the large numbers who had passed through the ranks, and partly by the educational efforts of missionaries of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose mission was established among them some sixty years ago. Such education as the Minas of this part of Rajputana have acquired is mainly due to these missionaries, not to the efforts of the

With the Deoli Irregular Force

Government of India, which has done very little in the matter. The Government of India has, however, done much for the welfare of these Minas by inducing the feudatory chiefs under whom they live to treat them decently. Should Government supervision over feudatory chiefs be in any way weakened, the Minas will be in great danger both from them and from their officials and will undoubtedly revert to their old methods.

Colonel Macdonald, a Highlander, was selected to command the Irregular Force and was still in command of it when I joined. He was then an old soldier, having joined the army about 1840. His first action had been the battle of Panniar, fought in 1843 against the Maharaja of Gwalior. He had subsequently served in the Gwalior contingent, which was organized when peace was restored, and he served with this till the Mutiny broke out and the contingent joined the rebels. He served in Central India throughout the Mutiny, so that all his service was passed in local corps and in a very limited area. That ordinarily is neither conducive to military efficiency nor to breadth of vision; but he was an exception. He was a man of broad views and of most courtly manners—the latter a matter of great importance in the case of those who serve with Indians. He sang a good song, was an excellent raconteur, and proved to be a most delightful companion. He was extremely popular with everyone, especially so with natives, for they thought him a real sahib, kind and considerate to all and particularly to the poor and humble.

Colonel Macdonald was somewhat eccentric, and he showed his eccentricity mainly in an excessive love of ceremonial. This little weakness amused his own countrymen, but it impressed Indians most favourably, for they all share it themselves and consider that those who ignore ceremonial are ill-bred and are devoid of manners. He cared nothing for sport, he never mounted a horse if he could avoid doing so, he read little except his weekly English newspaper, he led a sedentary life and he amused himself by gardening, building and playing the bagpipe. He started a bagpipe band in the infantry, a form of music which the Minas took to with great zest, and he sent his band to a Highland regiment for six months to be finished. When I joined it played quite well. He was the first officer of an Indian regiment to

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

start a band of the kind, but they have since become extremely popular and are very numerous, especially so in Pathan and Gurkha regiments, the native ranks of which much prefer them to brass bands. As his personal piper, Colonel Macdonald selected a young Mina, whom he called Fassifern; this youth was always in attendance on him and ready to strike up a tune when he called for it. At all sorts of odd hours, and especially during hot weather nights when sleep does not come readily to those exotics who lead a sedentary life, the skirl of the bag-pipe resounded through the little station from the colonel's house.

This house was an example of its owner's eccentricity. It had been planned and built by the colonel at his own expense, and it was an extraordinary building, planted down in the centre of a nice, artistically laid-out garden. It was constructed of solid masonry, the ground floor consisting of a square block with a flat roof; in the centre of the flat roof arose a structure in the shape of a railway-engine, with an enormously high chimney. The ground floor was broken up into several apartments, in one of which there was a shower-bath that was fed from a reservoir on the flat roof. There was, as is usual in Indian bungalows, a verandah all round the ground floor, and the structure like a railway-engine which reared itself up above the main building, served for sleeping-room to the colonel. This singular residence stood in the middle of a garden, irrigated by means of artificial water-courses in imitation marble, leading down from a big reservoir on an adjacent mound; sparkling fountains could be turned on at certain points. There was also a kiosk in the garden, and in this the colonel was wont to receive his numerous native acquaintances and to hold orderly-room—which he preferred to call *darbar* (court).

He affected the architectural style of the early Mogul period, and every building in the station that he had had any hand in constructing could be recognized by its characteristic tessellated ornamentation in various-coloured stone. The colonel's house, the tall chimney of which could be seen from an immense distance, excited the intense admiration and curiosity of the Mina villagers. They called it the *mahal* (palace), and on high days and holidays they came to inspect it in parties, accompanied by their women who were always veiled. The colonel delighted

With the Deoli Irregular Force

in these visits and he invariably received the villagers and showed them round himself. His special delight was to take a party of veiled women into the bath-room and to tell one of them to pull the string, whereupon they were deluged, to their own and his intense amusement. It was a joke that never palled on either. On occasions of native festivals he used to illuminate his house and garden, Indian fashion, with small and evil-smelling oil lamps, and he then invited the inhabitants of the cantonment and the Mina villagers to come and enjoy the spectacle. These social meetings, in which the officers of the Irregular Force participated, had the very best effect ; the poor villagers loved them and came to be proud of their regiment, for which recruits came in plenty.

During my career in India I always followed the good example Colonel Macdonald set me in doing what I could to introduce some pleasure into the hard, dull and monotonous life of the villagers. Very little amuses them, and they are very grateful for anything that is done in this direction. In the case of villagers under native rule, the celebrations held on all occasions of religious festivals afford them some diversion ; but villagers under British rule have no amusements other than what they pay for themselves, and they are mostly very poor. The Indian Government has no imagination and fails to recognize the great political advantage which would accrue were it to order its officials to assist and to support games and spectacles at native festivals to a far greater extent than they do at present.

On my arrival at Deoli my first duty was, of course, to report myself to Colonel Macdonald, and the meeting provided a good example of his eccentricity, and one which greatly amused me. He received me with ceremony ; the Indian officers and the bagpipe band were in attendance, and when I had been introduced to the former the musicians were ordered to perform. After a little general conversation, which I was able to carry on with the Mina officers in Hindi to their great pleasure and astonishment, he dismissed me with the following speech : " I welcome you to my regiment and do so especially because you are an Irish-Gael, for both the Irish and Scotch Gaels are blessed with the gift of imagination so necessary to exotics to enable them to get on well with Indians. Deoli, between April and October, is a difficult place for people of our race to live in ; here death

. General Sir O'Moore Creagh

comes on them suddenly from cholera morbus and other causes. But, fortunately, it does not matter much where one dies, provided one is prepared for that final event. The first thing I did on laying out this cantonment was to select a suitable site for a cemetery, to have my grave dug in it and to erect a tombstone. Nothing now remains but to put me into it and to inscribe my epitaph when necessary ; this I prefer to leave for others to do. My grave is my favourite resort, for the cemetery is within an easy walk and I have now converted it into a garden, outside which, and of the garden we are now in, all is glare, white and dust. Within these two spots there is green foliage and rippling water when the rains do not behave badly, so I spend most of my life in one or the other. Come to-morrow morning and have *chota haziri* (early breakfast) with me here, after which we will walk to my grave smoking our post-prandial cigars, and I will tell you your duties and my wishes as to how you should carry them out."

The colonel was over six feet in height, very thin, of a fair complexion, and with a merry twinkle in his grey eyes. I felt sure that the old gentleman and I would become very good friends, and so it turned out. On our way to the cemetery he took me to see a little artificial lake, with a temple erected on an island in the middle of it. He told me that the lake had been made and the temple had been built by the men of the infantry to commemorate the grant of good-conduct pay to them, and that when they had finished the temple the question arose as to what object of worship they should install in it. They decided that it should be himself, but he absolutely refused his sanction to any such proposition, and before he knew of their intention they had substituted the regimental doctor for him. The doctor was on leave at the time, so that he had no opportunity of refusing the honour that was being conferred on him. An exceedingly good likeness of the doctor was fashioned in clay, was painted red (the orthodox colour for a god) and was duly placed in the temple with great ceremony before any of the British officers could interfere. "Both I and the doctor," added the colonel, "considered the question of ordering the image's removal, but we both came to the conclusion that to destroy one installed in a temple might create undesirable trouble. It moreover is a very good likeness, so we agreed that

With the Deoli Irregular Force

“It was best not to interfere. So there it is.” I believe it is there still.

The colonel never occupied his Deoli grave. He retired in a couple of years and died in America of an overdose of some medicine he was ordered to take by a doctor. His memory will be long cherished lovingly in the heart of the Minas, amongst whom he did much good and by whom he was greatly liked and respected. The last time that I saw him he was on his way home on retirement, and when he stayed with me at Ajmir where I was then quartered. On his leaving my bungalow for Agra in a *shigram*, Fassifern was on the top mixed up with the baggage. As the *shigram* left my door the colonel said to me : “ Good-bye, my son,” and shouted to his piper, “ Fassifern, the dirge ! ” A dirge was at once struck up, and so we parted. Our regret was mutual ; but India is “ the land of regrets,” where, for one reason or another, one parts from friends more frequently than one does in other lands. So people there get used to farewells.

Colonel Macdonald’s son was my very good friend, the late Sir Claude Macdonald, who attained such distinction as the moving spirit of the defence of the Foreign Ministries at Pekin against the Boxers in 1900. He was subsequently Ambassador to Japan, and he was, I think, the only official who enjoyed the distinction of having been granted both a Civil and a Military K.C.B.

There were only four British officers in the Deoli Irregular Force, viz., the commandant, the second-in-command, the adjutant and the medical officer, who was also in medical charge of the Political Agency and Civil Station. Sikh officers commanded the cavalry squadron, under the supervision of the second-in-command ; the infantry officers commanded their companies under the supervision of the adjutant ; the commandant acted as a sort of Brigadier. Very few of the Indian ranks could then read or write, so clerical work was done by “ specials ” of the scribe castes who were enlisted for the purpose. The training of local corps was in those days far behind that of troops of the regular army, but they managed to rub along and to perform their duties in a sketchy way with a few British officers. Their duties, however, only consisted of supplying guards and escorts for political or civil officers, and aiding the police in

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

hunting down robbers. They were really more of the nature of military police than of soldiers.

Colonel Macdonald told me that when he was sent to raise the Deoli Irregular Force in 1859 he laboured under great disadvantages, for he did not know Hindi and he had never been able to learn it. He was given a Brahmin of Oudh as subadar-major, and another Brahmin of Agra as a subadar, together with several Oudh and Agra Brahmins and Rajputs as non-commissioned officers and old soldiers to form the nucleus of the new force. Like all Indian villagers the Minas are extremely shy of strangers and they had a strong objection to Brahmins and Rajputs, and especially to those from other provinces who did not know their language. So he found it impossible to get any Minas to enlist. When he, either alone or accompanied by any of these high-caste people, visited a Mina village, the inhabitants fled in alarm into the jungles which then abounded in the neighbourhood.

Fortunately, however, he heard that one of the Mina headmen had been for some fifteen years languishing as a prisoner of the Kota state, and that during most of the time he had been confined in a small cage which did not permit of his standing erect. He had been a notorious robber before his capture, with an extraordinary mastery of woodcraft, an art well known to the Minas, who are famed for their courage and cunning as hunters. In addition to his gifts of jungle-craft, this robber, whose name was Mangla, enjoyed a reputation among his caste-fellows of possessing occult powers, a circumstance which caused them to fear him and which gave him great influence amongst them. The colonel therefore took steps to obtain Mangla's release with a free pardon from the Kota state, and appointed him a subadar on condition that he would become an obedient servant to the British Government, and that he would not only raise a company but would induce Minas to enlist up to the required number. This the old robber swore to do. He was deeply grateful to the colonel for obtaining his release from his long and cruel confinement, and thenceforward there was no difficulty in obtaining recruits.

Mangla was a fine shikari, but owing to his long confinement he was permanently bent. He did not appear to suffer otherwise, except in his temper, which, however, like all Indians,

With the Deoli Irregular Force

he had completely under control till such time as he could give it vent without running unnecessary risk. He hated a Brahmin or Rajput with even a more violent hatred than that of most Minas of his clan, and I am sure he would have killed the first one of either caste he met had it not been for his promise to the colonel of obedience to the orders of Government, and for his fear of the *sirkar's* (Government) wrath should he commit what would be a dire offence in official eyes, although none in his own.

It was an unfortunate mistake to make a Brahmin the subadar-major of a Mina battalion, or to have men of that or of Rajput caste in it. The subadar-major, who had been in the Gwalior contingent in pre-Mutiny days, used to state openly that had he not been on leave when the Mutiny in which his regiment joined broke out he would have gone with his caste-fellows, whom he could not have deserted had he been present. The Brahmin subadar, Muthura by name, had, on the other hand, a most loyal record. When the Mutiny broke out he was a gunner in the Kota contingent. This corps was ordered to attack some mutineers, and no sooner had it received the order than the sepoys fired on their British officers and rushed off to join the rebels. They were in such a hurry to do so, however, that Muthura, the only one to remain loyal, had time to spike the guns, which otherwise would have been turned on the British, with whom he continued to serve till the suppression of the Mutiny. He was then, as a reward, sent to aid Colonel Macdonald.

My greatest friends were the old risaldar-major, Milkha Singh, and the ex-robber, Mangla, whose keen eye and rough, honest character were very attractive. He related many of the vicissitudes of his adventurous career to me, and he often accompanied me out shooting. It was under his guidance that I slew my first panther and my first sambur, as also numbers of black buck with fine heads. Antelope stalking is not bad sport in default of nobler game, provided that it is undertaken only with the intention to secure good heads. If one had no regard except for the size of the bag one could have shot a dozen in a day about Deoli, but to do so would not have been sport but murder.

I also purchased a fine pig-sticker, a chestnut country-bred gelding, rising five and 15.2, which turned out to be a speedy,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

high-couraged animal. But, like most country-breds, my pig-sticker proved to be somewhat capricious and was noticeably suspicious of strangers. I have, as a rule, avoided chestnuts, as my experience has been that they are generally light-boned, if nippy ; but in this particular instance I applied a test that had been taught me at home by an uncle who was a rare judge of horse-flesh. This test is to tap the horse's jaw-bone inside with a little steel hammer made for the purpose, and to place the ear against the horse's cheek and listen ; it is then possible to tell by the sound whether the bone is hard or soft. I have never known this method to be applied except in my youth and in the west of Ireland.

There was a regiment of Bengal Cavalry stationed at Deoli when I arrived there, and the history of the presence of such a regiment at the place illustrates the peculiarities of Indian military administration. A Bengal Cavalry regiment had been sent to Deoli in 1859 to do duty temporarily until such time as the Irregular Force had become efficient, but the regiment had been periodically relieved ever since and the military authorities had presumably forgotten why it had been sent. In 1874 certain moves that were necessitated by the situation in Beluchistan and by the fear of trouble in Afghanistan, however, caused the people up at Simla to withdraw the cavalry regiment ; and they were never able to send one back, owing to the great extension of territory that took place during the succeeding years as a consequence of the Afghan War and of the annexation of Upper Burmah in 1885.

Deoli was one of the old-world little military cantonments which in those days were spread over the face of India, and which would have been dull spots but for the sociability that obtained and for the sport that was usually to be had. The British officers of the cavalry regiment and of the Irregulars messed together and were on most friendly terms, and there were none of those petty quarrels which are so common in small Indian cantonments. The officers' houses and the Indian soldiers' lines were in the dilapidated condition usual at all the stations I had hitherto visited and to which I subsequently went. Things were different in the civil station, where a Political Resident reigned in solitary grandeur and had little intercourse with us soldiers beyond what his duties made obligatory. He and his large staff of Bengali

With the Deoli Irregular Force

babus got palatial residences rent free ; and a magnificently built jail was thrown in. As is the case everywhere in India, the splendour of the buildings in the civil stations offered a striking contrast to the squalor of those in the cantonment, and the sepoy used to say that Government treated not only its babus, white and black, but also its criminals better than it did its soldiers.

The officer for whom I was officiating was expected to return at the end of July, which would leave me without an appointment, but in the meantime I took great interest in the Deoli Irregular Force and in everything connected with it. Spare time was spent shooting and hunting, accompanied by four or five men from the regiment (never the same lot), and thus I soon got to know them all. That was a year of good rains, and towards the end of the hot weather I went off to a hilly jungle some ten miles away, where there were sambur. Being a novice and unaware how difficult it is to detect even such large beasts in thick jungle, while fallen trees, stones, holes and innumerable voracious mosquitoes impede progress, I on this occasion tried stalking. The proper method is to beat for them, and even then it is difficult in the wild rush of the herd to pick out the best head. Only one was bagged, with a very ordinary head, and was only shot to give the Minas accompanying me, who loved venison, a good feed.

On returning to cantonments I found that the officer for whom I was officiating had returned ; but a telegram from the Military Secretary to the Governor-General had arrived offering me the adjutancy of the Merwara Battalion, a local corps stationed at Ajmir. This I gladly accepted although sorry to leave the Deoli Irregular Force. So my slender kit was started off at once, and a horse dāk was laid out, ready for the third morning. There had been heavy rain during the previous night and the Banas river, which had to be crossed near Deoli, was rushing down in flood. My brother officers, British and Indian, tried to dissuade me from setting out till the flood had subsided, and it certainly looked rather formidable ; but I put my horse at it and we reached the other side with some difficulty, the current having carried us down a considerable distance. One soon dried from the ducking, but I had lost my sun-hat. It is not good for the exotic's head to be unprotected in India, but mine is pretty thick and it was

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

none the worse in spite of the long ride ; and it was pleasant, after cantering over miles of yellow, grassy flat, at last to see the purple hill of Taragarh above Ajmir standing up prominently from the plain, for this meant the end of the journey and prospects of a glass of Bass's beer.

CHAPTER IX

SOME NOTES ON RAJPUTANA AND THE MERWARAS

The Rajputs.—The British districts of Ajmir and Merwara.—Situation of the city of Ajmir.—The fortress of Taragarh.—The Agent to the Governor-General.—His cold-weather tours.—Ceremonial visits.—The insignia of rank amongst native princes.—The *istikbal* of the feudatory chiefs.—Sport in Rajputana.—The Mer caste.—Its origin and history.—The victory over Kutb-ud-deen.—His record and his connection with the Kutb at Delhi.—The predatory ways of the Mers subsequent to this.—The annexation of their country by the Government of India.—Its results.—The raising of the Merwara Battalion.—A detachment from it saves Ajmir arsenal at the time of the Mutiny.—The reward for the loyalty shown by the Mers.—A second battalion raised, but it is soon disbanded.—Some observations with regard to such disbandments and to the hardships which they cause.—Reorganizations of this kind are apt to spell inefficiency for a time.—Lord Mayo's visit to Ajmir and what it did for the Merwara Battalion.—Its duties in Ajmir.—My residence in Ajmir on joining.—The Commandant of the battalion, with whom I lived at first.

RAJPUTANA, the land of the Rajputs, is so called because in ancient times the Rajputs were the only martial race found in this part of India and because, although only a small minority of the population, they dominated the remainder. The region is now made up of a group of feudatory states, with a strip of British territory in their centre consisting of the districts of Ajmir and Merwara, cut off from the rest of British India. The population of the Ajmir district is, like the rest of Rajputana, heterogeneous, but that of Merwara, the land of the Mers, is homogeneous, and is composed entirely of the caste of that name. Ajmir has throughout the ages been owned by many masters, but Merwara was never conquered until it submitted to the British in 1822.

For purposes of administration both districts were united as a chief commissionership, of which the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana (with his headquarters at Mount Abu, some three hundred miles away) was ex-officio chief commissioner. He was represented locally by a commissioner. The town of Ajmir was the civil headquarters of both districts, and was also

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the headquarters of the Merwara Battalion. An ancient city, remarkable for its religious importance and for its picturesque situation, it lies in a fertile well-wooded valley. The highest of the hills enclosing the valley is the rocky peak, upon the flat summit of which stands the renowned primeval fortress of Taragarh, the walls of which also extend down the sides of the hill. The town of Ajmir lies at the base of the hill, between two beautiful artificial lakes which were excavated in the middle of the twelfth century. Their barrages are covered with ancient ruins, and they are well wooded. At the time when I arrived, Ajmir was at its best, the seasonal rains had been bountiful, both lakes were full, and the whole valley was a mass of green ; but it was infernally hot.

The stronghold of Taragarh, and also an old town called Ajmir, some six miles away, were built in the seventh century ; but the town was abandoned some years later and the present city was then built adjacent to the fortress. Town and district have at all times shared the fate of the fastness ; whoever owned Taragarh was master of the surrounding country and of the city. Its annals are an epitome of the history of upper India, for its possession has always served as an index of supremacy and as the prize of the victor in the succession of contests waged throughout the ages for the upper hand in the country. It has been occupied at various periods by different rival martial races, and it has been owned by many masters belonging to antagonistic castes and religions. It has sustained numerous sieges, and it underwent many assaults up to the day when its warlike career ended on its cession to the British in 1818 by the Maharatha chief of Gwalior, Maharaja Dowlah Rao Scindia. Its fortifications were largely dismantled a few years later, although little of the original remained even then, and the hill-top was thereupon made a hot-weather residence for local Europeans and for a few convalescent British soldiers from the cantonment of Nasirabad, which is situated fourteen miles to the south of Ajmir. The importance of Taragarh as a stronghold has, therefore, from the strategical point of view passed away.

When I first went to Rajputana in the year 1871 it was the most primitive part of India, a region where Western civilization had made little impression, where native lore and customs prevailed in their integrity and where the ritual attached to most

Some Notes on Rajputana and the Merwaras

ordinary affairs of daily occurrence made life dignified and leisurely. Of the eighteen feudatory states, sixteen were ruled by Rajputs of the purest blood in India, one was ruled by Hindus of the martial Jat caste, and one was ruled by Musalman Pathans descended from a famous trans-frontier freebooter who founded the state during the Pindari war.

The feudatory states had greatly prospered under more than half a century of fostering British suzerainty. But the Rajput dynasties had not forgotten the injuries inflicted on them by Mogul Emperors, nor the severe spoliation they had suffered at the hands of Maharatha marauders and of Pindari freebooters. The natives looked upon the British as the embodiment of justice, and they regarded the Agent to the Governor-General's cold-weather tour as one of the most important events of the year. He was, on these occasions, always accompanied by a large suite and by an escort of cavalry and infantry taken from provincial local corps. His camp was a moving town, which provided him and his suite in the jungle with all the comforts they enjoyed in their bungalows at Mount Abu, and its luxurious, well-furnished tents covered a large space. There was an immense durbar marquee; and other tents, smaller but commodious, were used as sitting and bed rooms by him, by his British assistants and by their wives. Others, again, were told off to native officials and clerks, or as offices, kitchens, guard-rooms and so forth. The transport required to move this camp and its establishments, excluding private riding horses and camels, consisted of numerous bullock-carts and of about three hundred baggage camels, which were hired through a contractor. Everything, except food, was provided on a liberal scale at Government expense.

The natives both in British territory and in the feudatory states hailed the visit of the "great sabib" with delight. They regarded him as the depository of their hopes and fears and as the redresser of their wrongs. His camp rivalled those of the greatest feudatory princes in magnificence and was not only an outward and visible sign of his power and authority, but was furthermore a spectacle (*tamasha*) which pleased them vastly. At each halt he and the notables of sufficiently high rank exchanged ceremonial visits, and all classes presented him with petitions. Those who had complaints stated them with freedom,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

and they were listened to with interest either by the great sahib himself or by a British assistant, as circumstances might dictate. If complaints were reasonable they were remedied without undue delay ; if unreasonable an explanation was given. In either case the petitioner was satisfied, for he had been heard by a sahib and if he did not obtain all that he wanted he ascribed his failure to malign fate.

All " functions " were carried on in accordance with ancient custom. The goings and comings, and especially the *istikbal*, were a joy to the gaping crowd—the word *istikbal* literally means " the meeting," but it is also used in the sense of a ceremonial visit. Among feudatory princes and Indians of high position this performance is carried out as follows : the visitor is received at a certain distance from his destination by the host or by a member of the host's family ; this distance, and whether the host himself or a member of his family meets the guest, depend on the rank of the respective parties, who are accompanied to the rendezvous by suitable retinues and by the insignia of their rank. These insignia consist of the right to use the *nalki* (a special kind of palanquin), the *morehal* (a fan of peacock's feathers mounted on a pole), the *mahi moratib* (or dignity of the fish), and the *nakara* and *dumana* or state kettle-drums. These distinctions were in vogue in the Mogul Empire, under which they were respected independent of religious differences. The *nalki*, *morehal* and dignity of the fish, which carry with them the right to the state kettle-drums, were only awarded to imperial princes and to vassal princes of the very highest rank ; kettle-drums alone were granted to nobles of lower degree. The *istikbal* in the case of Rajput feudatory princes was a most imposing medieval pageant. They and their courtiers were clad in brocades of brilliant colours and wore jewels of immense value. They came mounted on richly caparisoned elephants or on specially trained, prancing horses in glittering silver trappings. Their retinues were decked out in British military uniforms of the previous century and were armed with matchlocks dating back to the same epoch. A few of the more old-fashioned chiefs wore chain armour, and they carried lances, swords, and bows and arrows.

The courtesy of the peoples of Rajputana, the chivalry of its martial races, and the charm of its antiquity all greatly appealed

Some Notes on Rajputana and the Merwaras

to me. The abundance of game did so even more. The whole province is spangled with artificial lakes, where wildfowl of all sorts congregate in myriads during the cold season. The plains were at all seasons the home of bustard and of countless antelopes and gazelle; they moreover, afforded excellent pig-sticking in places. Many of the jungle-covered hills were notoriously the abode of tiger, panther, sambur, nilgai and wild pig, and the feudatory chiefs were most hospitable in allowing officers of the army to shoot and to hunt in their territory.

The history of the Mers and of the Merwara Battalion, recruited from this race, alike interested me greatly. The record of these people has been one of unbroken loyalty to the British since their territory was taken over by the Government of India. That of the troops which they have raised since they came under British control has been in the highest degree creditable.

The numerically small Mer caste, which when I first became associated with it numbered only about fifty thousand all told, is of mixed descent. The aborigines inhabiting the Merwara region were Minas, and amongst these a number of Rajput outlaws took refuge in very early times, so much so that these Rajput intruders tended to absorb the Minas inhabiting this out-of-the-way part of the world, and its inhabitants came to be known as the "Mer-log" or "hill people." Although the Mers nowadays are almost of pure Rajput descent, they are of the Sudra or menial caste, for the Brahminical caste-system prohibits inter-caste marriages and penalizes such unions by declaring the descendants illegitimate. The progeny of such marriages are incapable of inheriting the caste, or the hereditary dignities, or the possessions of either parent, and they are automatically relegated to the Sudra caste. Converts to Hinduism are only admitted into the Sudra caste, and Hindus always remain in the caste into which they were born. A few exceptions to this rule were made in ancient times, but Brahmins do not admit that this was the case.

The first authentic account of the Mers is given by a Musalman writer named Hassan Nizami in a book called the "Taj-ul-Massir," which was written at a very early period. I do not recollect what the date was. The author records that the Mers, in combination with certain Rajput clans, inflicted a severe defeat upon Kutb-ud-deen Ebak, who at the time was the Musalman

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

governor of Ajmir, in the year A.D. 1195. Kutb-ud-deen had played an important part in the overthrow of the Rajput Empire of Siwalakh (which may be said to have comprised roughly all cis-Sutlej India north of the Narbada river and the capital of which was Ajmir), and he eventually became Emperor of Delhi and was the founder of a Tartar or Slav dynasty which reigned until A.D. 1288. That dynasty was then in its turn overthrown by the Khiljai, another Tartar dynasty. The Emperor Kutb-ud-deen, it should be mentioned, commenced the building of the celebrated Kutb Minar at Delhi, together with the masjid that is attached to that remarkable tower. Up to the time of the Musalman conquest of the Siwalakh Empire, Delhi had merely been the capital of one of its feudatory states ; but Kutb-ud-deen made it the capital of his dominions ; before he had completed the Kutb tower he was in A.D. 1210 killed by a fall from his horse when playing polo. His successor, the Emperor Shams-ud-deen Altamash, went on with the building work and he completed the masjid ; but the Kutb was never finished.

From the time of their defeat of Kutb-ud-deen at the end of the twelfth century, down to the time of their annexation by the Government of India, it was the habit of the Mers to increase the scanty subsistence that they managed to extract from the sterile soil of their small district, by means of incursions into the neighbouring states. They were frequently successfully repelled on these occasions and chastised ; but owing to their valour and to the impenetrable nature of the jungle in which Merwara was clothed, they remained immune from subjugation by any Asiatic force.

But on the acquisition of the Ajmir district by the Government of India in the year A.D. 1818 this became a neighbour of the Mers. The feudatory states of Rajputana had from that time forward to be guaranteed against attack from without, so that incursions on the part of the Mers into such territory, as also into the Ajmir district, could no longer be tolerated. The only course open to the Government of India was to annex Merwara, and this was effected without difficulty. Under British rule the Mers speedily abandoned their predatory proclivities. They turned their attention instead to agriculture and to cattle-raising, they found these pursuits more profitable

Some Notes on Rajputana and the Merwaras

than robbery under arms had formerly been, and they soon became quite contented. What, moreover, added to their contentment was the fact that their new masters, acting on the sound principle of setting a thief to catch a thief which has so often proved successful when dealing with predatory clans, raised an infantry battalion from amongst them. Detachments of this battalion were furthermore distributed at various points in the Merwara country so as to maintain order and to set an example of discipline. The Mers enlisted freely in the corps and the whole tribe came to be intensely proud of their regiment. Their pride was, moreover, flattered by no natives of other parts of India being brought in to garrison their country.

At the time of the outbreak of the Mutiny at Meerut in May, 1857, Rajputana was garrisoned by five thousand troops of the Bengal Army, who depended for ammunition upon the Ajmir arsenal, which was then guarded by two companies of a notoriously disaffected Bengal native infantry regiment, the headquarters of which were at Nasirabad. The British authorities at once recognized the importance of placing the arsenal in loyal hands. Without a moment's delay one hundred men of the Merwara Battalion (owing to detachments, no more were available) under a British officer made a forced march from the regimental headquarters to Ajmir, a distance of thirty-seven miles. They surprised the disloyal arsenal guard, turned it out, and took charge of the arsenal. This move saved Rajputana from falling into the hands of the Bengal troops, for these, dismayed at their failure to get possession of the arms and ammunition, marched off to Delhi after they had murdered most of their British officers and had destroyed much property. Their arrival at Delhi was somewhat delayed owing to the refusal of the Mers to permit them to pass through Merwara.

Local corps receive pensions at a lower rate than those of the regular army. But on securing the safety of the Ajmir arsenal the Merwara Battalion was, while retaining its local status, awarded pensions at regular army rates. A second battalion which was then raised was also granted the same privilege. As a further reward for their loyalty and their services, the head-men of the Mers were, after the suppression of the Mutiny, promised by the Agent to the Governor-General in the name of the Government of India that a British officer should

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

always be the supreme local authority in Merwara, a promise made in response to the special request of the tribe. The Mers gave it as their reason for the request that they had never been conquered by "black men" and that if a black man was set in authority over them at any time they would lose their *izzat* (honour). They, moreover, contended that, in view of their being of low caste, they would not receive the same justice and the same courtesy at the hands of a native as they were in the habit of receiving from British officers.

On the reorganization of the native Indian army in 1862 the 2nd Mer Battalion was, however, disbanded, and the 1st Battalion was at the same time converted into police. Special arrangements were made as regards pensions. Those of men who had enlisted on or before the day in 1857 when the Mer detachment had made the Ajmir arsenal secure, were guaranteed at the regular army rate. Men of the disbanded battalion who had not served long enough to entitle them to pension were transferred to the Police Battalion to enable them to complete the necessary period. This disbandment of the 2nd Merwara Battalion suggests some remarks with regard to such changes when they take place in the Indian Army.

The reorganization of a native regiment as a general rule entails great hardships on at least some of its personnel. Those men—usually the younger ones—who are transferred to other units are regarded in these as outsiders. It is, indeed, only in accordance with human nature that they should not be welcomed in the unit to which they happen to be transferred, and that they stand but poor chance of promotion in this. There can be no doubt that in the majority of cases the disbandment of a regiment means that the prospects of its personnel are ruined and that those who remain on in the service have a grievance and are discontented. As a matter of fact, Indian officers, non-commissioned officers, and very senior sipahis are very seldom thus transferred to other units; instead of this they have to be pensioned. The terms given on such occasions may not appear ungenerous, and some men who cannot hope for promotion are probably quite content to retire; but the most efficient find that their career has ended abruptly. Take, for example, the case of a young and efficient havildar (sergeant) who has good prospects of getting a commission and of ending as a subadar (captain).

Some Notes on Rajputana and the Merwaras

He suddenly finds himself discharged on a small pension, and his feelings may be compared to those of a clever and rising young British officer, who is a captain and who looks forward to the time when he will be a divisional or army commander, on his being suddenly told that he must retire on a pension of £100 a year !

The case of men of a caste to be no longer recruited (this did not affect the Mers) is even worse. The prospects of the representatives of the expiring caste become gradually more and more restricted. Every means is used to get rid of them, and their departure is hailed with joy. They feel themselves isolated, and become dejected and consequently discontented. If the reorganization entails the disbandment of a battalion, which is raised again under a new constitution, the unit cannot be efficient for a long time ; the men, moreover, all grow old at the same time and go on pension simultaneously, and the corps will not be in a normal condition for, probably, twenty years. If the reorganization be only partial and gradual, the evils are not so great, but they by no means cease to exist. Although reorganizations may eventually prove of value to an army, they actually are apt to diminish its efficiency for many years. In the Indian Army cases of course occur which demand instant action. If, for example, any part of it is seditious, as the Bengal Army was at the time of the Mutiny, immediate disbandment is the only course. But, as far as the reorganization of the Mer regiments was concerned, the evils were added to by the one corps retained being reduced from the honourable status of soldiers to police, a less respectable status in the opinion of Indians.

Lord Mayo had visited Ajmir during the cold season before I joined the Merwara Battalion. The grievances of the regiment had been laid before him and he had ordered it to be restored to its original status of a local corps ; but the privileges of a regular regiment were not granted to it. Its sanctioned establishment was fixed at two British officers, 16 native officers, and 696 rank and file. The headquarters were transferred from Beawar to Ajmir, where its duties, which consisted of providing a jail guard, treasure guards and numerous guards and escorts for civil officials, were very heavy. As two companies remained detached permanently to garrison Merwara, there were very

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

few men available for training, and the battalion, although now military in name, was almost entirely occupied in civil duties, which, of course, adversely affected its fighting efficiency.

The cantonment of Ajmir, a small one covering about one thousand acres, contained only two bungalows, and there was not a vacant one in the civil station. One of the two in the cantonment was occupied by the commandant, and the other was occupied by the District Superintendent of Police, a German with an English wife, who would not vacate it for six months. I should, therefore, have been houseless but that, fortunately for me, the commandant's wife was at home for an indefinite period and that he invited me to share his bungalow till the policeman's was available—an offer which I gladly accepted. He was a comparatively young man who had entered the East India Company's service in 1859, had been posted to a Bombay native infantry regiment and had married about a year later. As both he and his wife belonged to old Anglo-Indian families, their combined interest had enabled him to get transferred to the Political Department of the Government of India, and he had been appointed an assistant to the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana. In this appointment he got increased pay, and he lived in the salubrious climate of Mount Abu during the hot periods of the year.

He was occupying this position when the Indian Army was reorganized and when the Staff Corps was brought into existence. He failed in the examination for admittance into this, and he remained a local officer on the cadre of his regiment. Most of his seniors were transferred to the Staff Corps and, profiting by their vacancies, he became a lieutenant-colonel in the unusually short period of about twelve years. On attaining this rank it did not pay him to remain in the subordinate post that he was occupying. His promotion in the Political Department was unlikely owing to his reputation for laziness. So he had managed to get back to military duty, and he had been made commandant of the Merwara Battalion when he had about fifteen years' service, almost all of which had been spent in civil employment. This may be taken as an example of the many cases in India in which interest compensates for incapacity or inertia.

The commandant had no pastime ; he was not a sportsman

Some Notes on Rajputana and the Merwaras

and he was the laziest man I ever met. He was one of those who, like many of his class, are born and spend their childhood in hot climates and who seem congenitally tired. His only accomplishment, a most valuable one for a man serving among those who speak that tongue, was a fluent knowledge of refined Urdu. He cared nothing for the military profession, and, beyond what was contained in "Infantry Drill," was quite ignorant of military matters. He thought it beneath his dignity to attend other than battalion parades, and as there were seldom sufficient men to hold one he saw very little of the regiment, the training and interior economy of which he carried on in accordance with my suggestions. My youth and inexperience made my position at first somewhat difficult, but having responsibility thrust on me thus early in my career was excellent training.

He was, however, popular with all classes in Rajputana. Many feudatory chiefs, nobles, and great banker-merchants (the latter are called Seths, and are people of influence) visited him. During the time that I shared his bungalow I therefore enjoyed an opportunity, such as seldom comes to a young officer serving with a regiment, of making the acquaintance of many notable Indians.

CHAPTER X

WITH THE MERWARA BATTALION IN RAJPUTANA

The English in Ajmir at this time.—Lord Mayo's assassination in the Andamans.—The inauguration of the forward policy on the North-West Frontier.—Efforts to make the battalion serviceable.—Pleasant relations with the Mers.—A regimental priest secured.—My bungalow and compound.—Servants and horses.—Sport and shooting expeditions.—The shooting of tigers and panthers by globe-trotters.—How my gardeners endeavoured to secure good luck for my garden.—Almsgiving in Rajputana.—Giving a "deg."—The hereditary beggars attached to the Ajmir shrine, and what the "deg" meant in their case.—An extraordinary spectacle.—Start a regimental garden.—The caste-god of the Mers.—An idol of this god set up in the regimental garden.—A dharamsala built for Hindu religious mendicants.—Habits and customs of these mendicants.—Their equipment.—Their system of self-torture.—Many of them impostors.—The Musalman fakirs.—The ruins about Ajmir.—Neglect of Indian ruins till Lord Curzon became Governor-General.—Railway projects in Rajputana.—My friends, British and native.—Sir Pertab Singh.

THE only English in Ajmir when I joined there were four or five district officials, a few missionaries, the officers of the Merwara Battalion, and five married ladies. Most of them lived on the top of Taragarh during the hot and rainy seasons, those who had work below coming down to it daily. Taragarh was, however, so restricted that I seldom went up there, so that I saw little of my compatriots except during a fortnight in the cold season when the Agent to the Governor-General camped in Ajmir and when they came in to pay him their respects. Nearly the whole of the year's entertaining was got through then, and the station used to be gay and to be full of "gup"—mainly political.

Lord Mayo was assassinated by a convict in the Andaman Islands in 1872, and Lord Northbrook succeeded him. The assassin was a trans-frontier Pathan and the murder had no political significance; but the annexation of Khiva to Russia occurred at that time, and in the following year the khanate of Bokhara was added to the Tsar's dominions. The settled policy of the Government of India had hitherto been not to

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

advance beyond the Indus Valley, but, consequent on these occurrences and actuated by ambition or by an exaggerated fear of Russian power—probably by both—an influential party of exalted civil and military officials now revived the invasion scare, and they brought about a policy of active interference in trans-frontier affairs. The dread of external war and of internal sedition dominated those in high places thenceforward.

There seemed, therefore, to be a prospect of the Merwara Battalion being employed in the field sooner or later, and I did what I could to promote its efficiency ; but, as it was armed with old smooth-bore percussion muskets and was handicapped by civil duties, it was hopeless to expect much. Still, one did one's best. I took a great liking to the Mers, who were honest, free-spoken peasants. Their language is a dialect of Hindi, which I soon learnt and was apparently the first European to do so. Although illiterate, they were not ignorant nor stupid, and I cultivated their friendship by practising the native proverb, "With sweet words and gentleness you can lead an elephant by the hair." In a couple of years my influence over them was considerable and this proved most useful when carrying out regimental recruiting, which the colonel placed in my hands. I induced a highly respectable Merwara Brahmin to accept the position of regimental priest. It was an unauthorized appointment, but as it entailed no expense to Government, owing to the priest being paid by a small subscription from all ranks, no objection was raised, and it was heartily welcomed by the entire Mer caste. An Englishman will never acquire influence amongst Indians if he ignores their clergy and their religion.

My bungalow stood in a compound of about four acres, the soil of which was fertile, while the water-supply from two deep wells was fairly good. My landlord was always willing to maintain repairs and to effect improvements, and he only asked the moderate rent of 60 rupees a month—then less than £60 a year. We soon became friends and are so still. I had a letter from him recently, written in his eighty-second year, telling me that he was in good health and that the Indian Government had conferred on him the title of Diwan Sahib, a high distinction. Servants of good caste were engaged, including a first-rate cook, and I bought a good horse and two useful ponies ; the horse was used as a pig-sticker and charger, the ponies were used

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

for hacking, or for harness-work with a light bamboo shooting-cart which got over the roughest ground. I kept a shikari who sent me news of game worthy of attention, and I soon became acquainted with numbers of the peasant farmers, who used to bring me information, so that I had plenty of sport.

Most of my shikar expeditions were of short duration, often only lasting for the day, or for a few hours. The month of April was devoted to big game shooting in far-away jungles, for there were no tigers nor panthers near Ajmir. During the rainy and the cold seasons water is abundant everywhere and the undergrowth in the jungles then becomes dense. Wild animals at that time of the year travel great distances and are difficult to locate, so that ordinary persons can only shoot them in the hot weather, when water is scarce and the undergrowth is burnt up. As such ordinary persons generally cannot procure shikar elephants they shoot on foot, which involves some little danger—especially to a novice. In Rajputana tigers and panthers can only be found in the cold season in the preserves of the feudatory chiefs, and only high officials and distinguished globe-trotters are as a rule allowed to shoot in these. The animals are driven up to a miniature castle, called an *udai*, in which the sportsman sits in safety, or else he shoots from the back of a perfectly trained shikar elephant. I knew a Viceroy who slaughtered over twenty tigers and three or four panthers in a single week in one of these preserves; they were as easy and as safe to shoot as so many cows.

I made my compound into a good flower and vegetable garden and planted many shade-giving trees. To bring the garden good luck, the gardeners (*malis*) commenced operations by celebrating the marriage of a young neem-tree and a young pipal-tree. The ceremony consisted in planting them close together, entwining their branches, and performing the *puja* (worship) customary at weddings in the *mali* caste. I gave the wedding-feast of unleavened bread, clarified butter, various kinds of sweetmeats and native liquor. All my Hindu servants joined in the *puja* and the feast, regardless of caste differences; they kept the day as a holiday and the feast lasted well into the night, for the Hindu proverb says: "Where there is a marriage they may sing all night."

Some of the British in Rajputana made a practice of giving

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

alms on Sundays and Christmas Days to old and infirm poor. I followed this custom, distributing small silver and copper coins and, what was greatly appreciated, said a few words of sympathy while doing so to about thirty unfortunates. These habitually assembled at my bungalow to receive charity.

A method of almsgiving is in vogue at the local shrine, which is called giving a "deg." The custom is unique and is ancient. This shrine maintains some thousands of hereditary beggars (called sons of holy men) who live idle on its charity. The entrance to its outer court passes under an arched gateway, the top of which is reached by steep narrow steps. On either side of this archway, within the court, is an enormous copper boiler, called a deg; the larger of the two is capable of holding five thousand pounds of rice and the smaller holds about half that quantity. When rich Indians of certain castes visit Ajmir, it is usual for them to order the degs to be filled, and this is accordingly done with rice, sugar, clarified butter, sweetmeats and various spices. It requires a whole night to boil this mess, which is distributed next morning among the hungry beggars. The distribution is an extraordinary spectacle, and the pious donor witnesses it, seated on the top of the archway. Some of the oldest beggars are entitled to special portions, and, when their share has been taken out and distributed, large shovelfuls of the victuals are thrown among the holy crowd, who scramble for them with such eagerness that they soon begin fighting tooth-and-nail. In the meantime, some, who have taken the precaution to previously wrap old rags round their bodies and limbs, plunge into the boilers, and there a fierce battle takes place for every handful. But, should a stranger venture to intrude on their prescriptive right and try his luck for a share of the food, which is considered consecrated, they instantly combine to drive him away and to punish him for his audacity. The food is afterwards sold by the beggars at a high price because of its sanctity. The Maharaja Sindhia, father of the present Maharaja, was the only feudatory chief who gave a deg while I was at Ajmir.

By request of the Mer officers I started a regimental garden, which was worked by soldiers, in cantonment-land close to my bungalow. It proved very profitable and I was not only able to use it for giving some elementary instruction in modern

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

agriculture, but also to provide medical comforts for the regimental hospital and bedding for soldiers' families from the money that we made. Shortly after the garden was completed the native officers in the name of all ranks requested permission to install an idol of Tejali, the caste god of the Mers, in it and to build a rest-house in it for the comfort of wandering Hindu religious mendicants. The innumerable Hindu gods are worshipped in the form of idols that are sold in every bazaar at their intrinsic value, which varies between large sums and a few pence. Tejali is represented in idols as a warrior mounted on a horse, with a drawn sword in his hand and a snake biting his tongue. The legend regarding him runs that when on the point of being killed by the bite of a deity, embodied in a snake, Tejali asked for a few days' grace to fulfil a vow, promising to return. The snake-god granted the request and Tejali in due course returned and presented his tongue to be bitten. So he died, and he has been deified ever since.

The installation of the idol and the opening of the rest-house were ceremoniously carried out and were attended by a number of Merwara villagers, to whom I gave a feast in celebration of the event, and the rest-house was subsequently frequented by many mendicants. Wishing to learn as much as possible about these people, I asked the regimental priest to encourage any who were fairly clean to visit me, which they were glad to do judging by the number of callers who presented themselves, and one thus acquired a knowledge of their habits and customs. A Hindu of any caste, male or female, may join this mendicant community, in which males are in the large majority, and it is divided up into many orders, each of which has its own rules. The males of all orders went about naked but for a loin-cloth of indecently restricted dimensions. They hold that cow-dung and ashes purify the soul, and they cover their usually attenuated bodies from head to foot with this filthy mixture.

Members of each order wear its symbols and those of its special deity, painted in red, white, or brown, on the chest, forehead and arms. They carry a long rosary round the neck, a begging-bowl made of a gourd, and a pair of iron tongs. As they walk along the road they count their rosaries, exclaiming, "Ram, Ram" loudly as each bead passes between finger and thumb. They use the tongs as a head-rest when they are rapt in

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

religious meditation, to poke the fire with when cooking, and as a drum-stick to beat the begging-bowl with so as to make a hideous noise. The females are similarly equipped; but they wear the ordinary costume of their caste, which must be yellow. Hindus believe that the sure method of gaining religious merit is to mortify their bodies, and the religious mendicants sometimes tortured themselves in a horrible manner; they did so in public so as to excite pity and to obtain alms—thus accumulating both ante-mortem and post-mortem credit.

Some of these Hindu mendicants are devout and lead holy lives according to their creed; but the majority of them have the reputation amongst their co-religionists of being unmitigated rascals who manifest the worst characteristics of the monks and nuns described by Boccaccio. Some of them, however, are proud and arrogant clerics, who enjoy the privilege of entering houses and zenanas at pleasure. Many of the mendicants amass large fortunes, travel only during the cold weather, and spend the rest of the year in their homes, leading luxurious, immoral, intemperate lives.

Musalman religious mendicants, called *jakirs*, are only of the male sex. The calling is largely hereditary. They come from all classes of society, they wear no distinctive costumes, but they are divided into many orders. The most venerated of these orders either claim descent from the prophet Mahommed or else from his tribe, the Koraish. They carry rosaries on which they repeat the ninety-nine attributes ascribed to God by Musalmans, and the proportion of those amongst them who are genuinely devout is relatively large.

Ajmir is strewn with ruins of early Hindu, Saracenic and Mogul periods—the Pathans when dominating India neglected its environs. I appreciate Indian architecture, and during my leisure hours never tired of wandering round the city's numerous places of interest. Almost every dominant race in its day, actuated by religious or by utilitarian motives and often by both, destroyed the temples and palaces of their predecessors. Those who did not act in this fashion left the destruction to be effected by time and by neglect. Shortly after the British occupied Ajmir, the beautiful palace built by Akbar and occupied by many of his successors was converted into an arsenal, and subsequently it was used for civil offices and police quarters. Fine white marble

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

pavilions that had been erected by the Emperor Jehangir on the barrage of one of Ajmir's lakes were converted into residences for British officials, into offices, and into a station reading-room. Not until 1900, when Lord Curzon became Governor-General, were measures taken to preserve the ancient buildings in British India, and the action then set by the Government of India greatly pleased the people; the example set by Simla in the matter was moreover followed in the feudatory states.

It was a valuable experience early in my career in India to serve in a part of India that was still in a primitive condition. But projects of railway construction were already under consideration on my arrival, and the Government of India was contemplating the spread of English education among the sons of the Rajput ruling chiefs by founding the Mayo College at Ajmir. These projects very soon took shape, and thereupon the rampant Englishism which prevailed in other provinces gradually overran this region, without any attempt being made to harmonize modern ideas and developments with the traditions of the past, to which Indians attach such great importance. The neglect to turn knowledge of the people to account and to employ discrimination and judgment when introducing reforms had caused troubles in India in the past, and the same kind of neglect was destined to cause fresh troubles in the future.

Nearly all my British friends in the Ajmir district were local civilians and military officers, and I subsequently lost sight of most of these. The only one of them whose future career was to be a brilliant one was Captain (afterwards Sir West) Ridgeway, who was then assistant to the Agent to the Governor-General and who enjoyed a high reputation for tact and ability. As is well known, he in later years rose to high positions in the service of the State. My Indian friends were naturally more numerous than my British ones, I never lost sight of them so long as they lived, and I have since that time been on friendly terms with many of their sons and grandsons. Indians always place a high value upon the friends of their forbears. My most intimate associates were Maharaj-Kumar (Prince) Pertab Singh and his brother Maharaj-Kumar Kishore Singh of Jodhpur. Kishore Singh afterwards became Commander-in-Chief of the Jodhpur forces, and he died of drink some forty years ago. Pertab Singh became in the course of years a familiar figure in

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

England and in other lands as Lieutenant-General Sir Pertab Singh, A.D.C., G.C.B., LL.D., D.C.L., Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, Knight of the Order of the Nile, and Honorary Colonel of the 17th (Queen Victoria's Own) Poona Horse. He remained an intimate friend of mine up to the time of his death in September, 1922.

Many years later, when I came to be Commander-in-Chief in India, I frequently consulted him in connection with questions affecting Indian soldiers, and I could always rely on his giving a candid and generally a sound opinion. His was a unique personality. He detested those British and Indian visionaries who considered self-government to be appropriate in his country, and he deprecated the luxurious life prevalent at the native courts. A renowned sportsman, he only enjoyed shikar on horseback, and his knowledge of horses and all that concerned their training was remarkable. On a seditious press being set up in Ajmir by a Bengali some forty years ago, a party of Rajputs smashed it up one night and severely beat the owner ; it was generally believed that the raiders were Pertab Singh's retainers. A gallant and loyal soldier, he will be remembered as long as chivalry lasts.

CHAPTER XI

WITH THE MERWARA BATTALION IN RAJPUTANA—*continued*

A serious illness.—How I was cured.—Sent home on sick leave.—My first marriage.—Attend a garrison class in Dublin.—Rejoin my regiment.—Growth of Ajmir owing to the development of railways.—The code of precedence in India.—An example of the trouble that it causes.—The native actor-people and their marionette shows.—The death of my wife from cholera.—Opening of the Mayo College.—Sir Oliver St. John.—Visit of Lord Northbrook to Ajmir.—My temporary association with him.—His satisfaction with the escort furnished by the Merwara Battalion.—The Bengali station-master and the tiger.—The visit of the Prince of Wales to India.—His stay at Agra.—The march past of the military escorts of the assembled chiefs.—The Prince's wish to have military officers about him.—H.R.H. comes to Jaipur.—The regiment finds the escort, under my command.—Scenes of enthusiasm at Jaipur.—Pertab Singh in charge of the arrangements for sport.—Anxiety of the Maharaja of Jaipur lest H.R.H. should meet with an accident.—The Prince kills his first tiger.—Success of his visit to India.—An unsatisfactory temporary commandant of the Merwara Battalion.—The youthful feudatory Prince of Alwar comes to the Mayo College.—His tutor and his retinue.—*Ganga-jallis*.—A wild ride on a calf elephant with the feudatory Prince.—We become fast friends.—The railway volunteers.—Rise in prices, owing partly to this.—The Government plays into the hands of the *banias*.

EARLY in the hot season of 1873 I was suddenly attacked by fever of a virulent type, which prostrated me. I became insensible and remained so more or less for about a fortnight. I was attended by an ancient warrant-officer of the Indian Subordinate Medical Service, who was the civil surgeon of Ajmir and was *ex-officio* in charge of the regiment. His professional attainments were not of a high order; but tropical diseases were little understood in those days and another medico might have been no better. My recovery was due rather to a good constitution and to assiduous, although primitive, nursing by Mer soldiers, than to medical skill.

The regimental priest performed incessant *puja* for my recovery, and my Indian friends and the regiment attributed my restoration to health to the efficacy of his prayers. They thought that I did, too, and I made no attempt to undeceive them, expressed my gratitude to the priest and, in accordance

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

with Indian custom, celebrated convalescence by giving a feast to the mendicants. The doctor vaguely diagnosed my illness as jungle fever (it probably was enteric), and, while I was still so weak as to be unfit for a journey at the hottest time of the year, he sent me to Bombay to appear before a medical board. I arrived in such a dilapidated condition that the board, much against my wish, ordered me home on eighteen months' furlough.

Health improved rapidly during the voyage and I was quite recovered by the time of arrival in England. The furlough was spent in Ireland, where I made Birr my headquarters, having many friends and relations in that neighbourhood, and while at home I married a cousin, Miss Mary Brereton, whom I had known from childhood. I also went through a garrison class at Dublin, for, serving in India, one got behindhand as a soldier owing to most senior officers being professionally ignorant and the regiment being the sole school of instruction. The course lasted four months, and on its termination a pretty stiff examination was held simultaneously at all stations at which the classes assembled. Officers who passed this examination with distinction were awarded first-class certificates, with special mention in those subjects in which they had excelled, while the others who only qualified got second-class certificates. I obtained a first-class certificate, with special mention of "very good in reconnaissance and good in the other subjects."

We arrived back at Ajmir in the autumn of 1874. A metre-gauge railway had been almost completed through Rajputana during my absence, and it was open for traffic between Agra and Jaipur. The Mayo College also was nearly ready for opening. Numerous bungalows had been built for the railway officials at Ajmir, which was the headquarters of the metre-gauge system, and the European suburb of the city had thus been transformed into an important civil station, with a large official society. Precedence in India depends almost entirely upon military rank, and, so as to regulate it as between officers of the army and civil servants, all gazetted officers doing duty in the civil service are given relative military rank. But the standing of individuals, except of those occupying exalted positions, is often ambiguous, and this frequently leads to unseemly quarrels among them. For civil officials are usually ultra-sensitive regarding their personal dignity—and their wives are even more so.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Non-officials have no rank, but they get on extremely well without it. The large civil stations, where the official element preponderates, the tranquillity of social life is often disturbed by polemics arising out of questions of precedence. I know nothing more conducive to snobbery than the Indian precedence code.

I was present, shortly after my return from leave, at a small private dinner party at which our host took in a lady who ranked as a major, unaware that among his guests there was another lady who ranked as a lieutenant-colonel. The female lieutenant-colonel was furious at her junior preceding her, and she showed it by refusing to speak, to eat or to drink during the meal; then, before the wine went round, she abruptly left the table, strode to the door, called for her carriage and departed without saying good night to anybody. I never before saw such an exhibition and was much amused by it. Early next morning our host received an official letter from the lady's husband informing him he would be reported to superior authority for grossly insulting his (the lady's husband's) wife. These incidents usually result in a long official correspondence, but a humble apology, fortunately, ended this row as between the principals. Partisans of the pacified parties, however, maintained strained relations for some time afterwards.

The life of prominent persons in India comes more under the eye of the public than it does in any other civilized country. Their virtues and vices are discussed in bazaars and are described in travelling shows called *putli naches*—doll dances, run by people of a semi-nomadic low Hindu caste called *nat-log* (actor people). The *nat-log* are excellent mimics and they take off Anglo-Indians extremely well; these as a rule know nothing about the actor people, but Indians of all castes and positions are extremely fond of their performances, which are well attended. Each show is run by a *nat-log* family, the head of which is actor-manager; its "properties" consist of a number of dolls which are used to represent British officials and their ladies, natives of note, and often a god, goddess, or some virtuous character described in ancient history. The dolls are placed on an impromptu stage, and, while they bow and posture to the audience under manipulation of members of his family, the manager tells the true story of the originals. He imitates their personal peculiarities

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

and he often uses a god, goddess or ancient worthy to supply a contrast. His narrative is apt to be witty and to be bitingly sarcastic ; he awards praise and blame impartially, and he states the amount of wealth and influence of each person, and also his true caste and pedigree and how both were acquired. Both caste and pedigree are often faked in India, as is the case in other countries.

My wife liked life in India as much as I did, and during her short experience of it she never had a moment's illness until she was attacked by cholera towards the end of her first rainy season. She died within thirty hours of her seizure, leaving an infant daughter. During my bereavement I received the greatest sympathy and kindness from everyone. A lady at once removed my daughter from the infected house to her own, and she shortly afterwards took the child home to her mother's family in Ireland.

During the early part of the cold season of 1874-5, the Mayo College was opened, and Lord Northbrook arrived in Jaipur on a four days' visit. Major (afterwards Sir Oliver) St. John, R.E., who belonged to an old Anglo-Indian branch of the ancient English family of this name, was the first principal of the Mayo College. He was admirably suited for the position. He had spent most of his previous service in Persia in semi-diplomatic work connected with the erection of telegraph lines, and he had acquired a great knowledge of Orientals. He was clever, accomplished, tactful, self-reliant and, what most appealed to the students, was a good horseman and shikari. I became very friendly with him and with his wife, and remained so till his death many years later. It was only after much pressure at the hands of the political officers that feudatory chiefs and nobles, although they had subscribed liberally to the building of the Mayo College, consented to send their sons there. When they did so the ladies of their zenanas insisted on the youths being accompanied by a host of sycophantic hangers-on, whose influence was not beneficial.

I was ordered to Jaipur in command of one hundred men of my regiment for duty to act as escort to the Viceroy during Lord Northbrook's stay. He stopped at the Residency, and we of the escort were encamped in the Residency compound. The Resident was Colonel Beynon ; he was the son of a missionary who had married the daughter of Sir George Lawrence, Agent

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

to the Governor-General in Rajputana during the Mutiny and for several years afterwards—it illustrates how appointments in the Political Department had come to be almost hereditary in certain Anglo-Indian families. Lord Northbrook was the first Indian Viceroy whom I came in contact with, and I had several conversations with him. He was quite unassuming and was most courteous, although his manner seemed to me somewhat *distrain* when first he spoke to me. But on better acquaintance I found him to be most observant. He asked me many questions with regard to the Mers, talked to some of the native officers of my detachment, making use of me as an interpreter, and expressed gratification that I was acquainted with their language. On his departure he desired me to inform my detachment that he was pleased with their physique, their intelligence and their turn-out, whereupon they pronounced him to be a “pukka Burra Sahib” (a real great sahib) and expressed their delight at being able to pay him their respectful homage. Before he left he gave me two hundred rupees to spend on a dinner for the men. No Governor-General, before or since, ever gave money to soldiers on duty, and his doing so was adversely criticized. It was during his Governor-Generalship that the advocates of active interference in trans-frontier affairs became predominant and that Baluchistan was virtually annexed.

While I was at Jaipur I was told an amusing story illustrating the Bengali character. A wandering tiger had a short time before taken up its temporary abode in the compound of a small railway station about ten miles away in the jungle. The Bengali station-master had thereupon sent the following telegram to his British superior officer at Jaipur: “Tiger in charge, I on roof, please arrange.” The British officer at once went to the place, shot the tiger, and the station-master descended and resumed control.

Lord Northbrook was succeeded by Lord Lytton early in 1875. At the time of the new Viceroy's assumption of office, seditious propaganda was being carried on in the native press of Calcutta and Bombay with great virulence. In the cold season of 1875-6, H.M. the late Queen Victoria was proclaimed Empress of India and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales (afterwards King Edward VII.), then on a state visit to the country, arrived at Agra, where he received a splendid welcome. His camp was

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

magnificent and was surrounded by the almost equally magnificent camps of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of Oudh and Agra, of the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana, and of the feudatory chiefs of States in the vicinity of Agra. My regiment was present at Agra, on duty as escort to the Agent to the Governor-General in Rajputana.

Among the numerous functions which took place during the Prince's visit, that which interested me most was the march past His Royal Highness of the military escorts of the assembled chiefs. These escorts were composed of cavalry, with a small proportion of infantry and a band. The horses were mostly ancient, untrained, vicious rosinantes which kicked, bit and squealed in the ranks. The warriors were equally ancient; those of the cavalry wore chain-armour and carried lances of enormous length, while those of the infantry wore uniforms of various British patterns of the previous century. The bands used Indian wind instruments of all shapes and sizes, with English drums to accompany them, and the noise that they made was appalling. The drill of these nondescript forces was primitive, and they could only march past in fours. One old warrior marching in the column, who had a huge drum and a trumpet about ten feet long, seized by an excess of loyalty, halted suddenly on arriving in front of His Royal Highness and struck up what was meant to be "God Bless the Prince of Wales." The escort which he led halted likewise, but those in rear continued their march, and the result was hideous disorder. Mounted men fell from their horses and they and infantry bolted in all directions to escape from the terrified steeds. The scene was most ridiculous, and the spectators (with the exception of the Prince and his staff) broke into derisive laughter. His Royal Highness and his suite did not even smile, but I expect that the royal party had a good laugh when they returned to camp. It was said that when the Prince first came to India he was surrounded by civil and political officials, to the exclusion of military officers, but that he soon altered this state of affairs by inquiring if there were any soldiers in the country. Whether the story was true or was false, it increased his great popularity with the army.

On the conclusion of his visit to Agra His Royal Highness stayed for a couple of days at Jaipur, where he was the guest of the ruler, His Highness Maharaja Siwai Ram Singh, and the

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Residency was placed at his disposal. I had the honour of commanding his special escort of two companies of my regiment. We camped in the Residency compound and I was responsible that no one was admitted to either compound or house, except by authority of a member of the Royal Staff with all of whom, and especially its chief General Lord Alfred Paget, I was in touch. The Maharaja and his subjects of all castes and positions were intensely gratified at the visit of the Heir Apparent of the Great Queen, the designation of Queen Victoria in Rajputana. For days before His Royal Highness's arrival immense crowds covered the roads leading to Jaipur, the rich riding on elephants, camels and horses, and their ladies conveyed in magnificent carts drawn by beautiful bullocks, the poor walking and their women riding on bullocks and buffaloes. But all alike were intent upon making respectful obeisance (*darshan*) to the Royal Visitor, and the capital was soon surrounded by their gaily beflagged tents of many colours.

On the day of the Prince's arrival the Residency compound was full of beautifully caparisoned elephants and of carriage- and riding-horses, the furniture heavily embossed with silver, awaiting the orders of the royal party. Outside the compound there was a large force of strangely equipped State troops to act as guard. The town was thronged by tens of thousands of visitors, and both they and the citizens had turned out in gala attire of brilliant colours. In the bright sunlight the *tout ensemble* was most inspiring and it was even more so at night, for Jaipur and the hills in its vicinity were illuminated and fireworks kept going off continuously. Native music, accompanied by the inevitable tom-tom, in the meantime resounded from all directions. The Prince was met by the Maharaja, at the head of a magnificent procession, and his reception by the assembled multitude was most loyal and cordial.

Maharaj-Kumar Pertab Singh was aide-de-camp to His Highness the Siwai Maharaja of Jaipur, and that potentate directed him to provide sport for the royal party. Pertab Singh arranged for plenty of pig-sticking, but tigers, on the other hand, were scarce and only a single one had been located ten miles away. The Maharaja wished the Prince to shoot the animal, giving as his reason: "When tiger-shooting I can remain by His Royal Highness's side and can protect him, but if he hunts

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

wild boar I cannot do so and an accident may then happen." The Prince greatly pleased the Maharaja by acting in accordance with his desire, so only members of the royal suite hunted boar. The Prince and the Maharaja sat in a *udai*, and Pertab Singh, mounted on a thoroughbred Arab horse and armed with a hog-spear, superintended the beaters as they drove the tiger up to this. When the brute was nearing the *udai* it took a wrong turning ; but Pertab Singh, determined that it should not escape from the Prince's rifle, rode straight at it from among the beaters and, with the greatest gallantry, forced it to take the right course. The Prince then shot what was, I believe, his first tiger.

The Prince's visit to India counteracted seditious propaganda for a time. His dignity and genial affability attracted the chiefs, nobles and martial races, whose praise of him was general and sincere. It would have been happy for India had it been given a royal Governor-General, for the people's loyalty is not to Parliament nor to officials, however great they be, but to the King and to the Royal family. The Prince created such an impression on Pertab Singh that His Royal Highness became, and ever remained, as a god in the eyes of that distinguished Rajput. It was veneration and love for His Royal Highness that impelled Pertab Singh to utilize his great qualities, which in all probability would otherwise have remained dormant.

Shortly after my return to Ajmir from Jaipur at the time of Lord Northbrook's visit, the Commandant of my regiment had gone home on eighteen months' furlough, and a captain in the Bombay Staff Corps was appointed to officiate in his absence, from being second-in-command of another local Rajputana corps. This captain was well known in the province as an inefficient officer of indifferent intellect and of immoral character, and he was held in contempt by everybody who knew him. Soon after he took over charge of the Merwara Battalion this was inspected by Brigadier-General (afterwards General Sir Robert) Phayre, who reported him as unfit for retention in the army and recommended his immediate dismissal. But the Government of India took no action on the General's recommendation, although it was supported by the local government. The officer's subsequent career fully justified General Phayre's report. On the completion of his temporary tenure of command of us he went home on eighteen months' leave, and during that time he was promoted

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

major and he married. On the expiry of his leave he resumed his old permanent appointment, accompanied by his wife ; she, however, soon left him on account of his behaviour, and he then took up with the abnormally ugly daughter of the doctor of his corps. This created such a scandal that he was obliged to retire on pension, which meant his leaving India in company with the lady and her father.

Early in the cold weather of 1876 His Highness Maharao-raja (afterwards created Maharaja) Siwai Mangal Singh, feudatory Prince of Alwar, arrived at the Mayo College to complete his English education, and he was the first ruling chief to be included amongst its *alumni*. He was then a minor of about sixteen years of age (majority is attained in India at the age of eighteen), and his principality was being ruled during his minority by a regency of nobles and high officials, who were dominated by a Political Officer appointed by the Government of India. The young chief had, when about twelve years of age, been adopted by his predecessor, who had died childless, and the lad had then been placed under a grumpy, ill-mannered, English-educated Kashmiri tutor. This tutor had taught the boy to talk English fluently, but not to write it with equal facility—which, in fact, he never learnt to do.

He arrived at the Mayo College with this tutor, whom he detested, with three or four lords-in-waiting, and with some five hundred followers, together with a great array of English-built carriages, a four-in-hand drag, a large stable of riding and driving arabs and walers, several bullock conveyances of native pattern, about a dozen riding-camels and elephants, a pack of English fox-hounds, a number of hunting *cheetas* (leopards), and falcons of every description—a generous equipment for a youth *in statu pupillari*. The position of followers attached to great families in India is hereditary. Those of the young Maharao-raja consisted of Brahmin cooks and *ganga-jallis* (carriers of Ganges water, which is a monopoly of the Brahmin caste), of household servants, of barbers, of musicians, of jesters, of running footmen, of shikaris, of falconers, of riding-camel and elephant attendants, of grooms and of dog-boys. Like most opulent Hindus he used sacred Ganges water for cooking, for drinking and for ablutions ; the water was brought by his *ganga-jallis* from the junction of the Ganges and the Jamna near Allahabad.

With the Merwara Battalion in Rajputana

That locality is called Prag by the Hindus, who believe that the Sarasvati here unites with the other two rivers underground ; those are the three most holy rivers in India, and their junction is so sacred that Hindus dying there are certain of immediate beatitude without further transmigration. Especial sanctity is attached to Ganges water drawn from this spot.

Shortly after Mangal Singh arrived at the college he came by himself to visit me, riding bare-backed a calf elephant, and he asked me to take a ride on the animal, so I mounted behind him. The beast went quite well for a short way, but then bolted across country and carried us on its headlong course under trees, the lower branches of which threatened to sweep us off our mount's back at no little risk to life and limb. After covering about three miles at top speed, during which we fortunately escaped injury, Mangal Singh contrived, by applying the *ankus* (elephant goad) with vigour, to get the beast under some sort of control. We looked upon the incident as a joke, but the tutor heard about it and he took the young prince to task for his recklessness in my presence. He wound up his admonition with the solemn words : " Maharao-raja Sahib, you should recollect that you are a King." " King, indeed !" remarked the delinquent, turning to me ; " if I were a King I should hang that old fool." The tutor was soon after this removed and was replaced by an officer of the Political Department, to whom Mangal Singh became greatly attached. Nearly all the chiefs and notables whom I have known, who have subsequently gone wrong, have been subjected to bad tutors in their youth.

During the two years that this young prince remained at the Mayo College he and I became great friends. He used to spend much of his time with me and we frequently went on shikar expeditions together. When he attained his majority and definitely became ruler of his State he left the college. I often visited him afterwards, and our friendship lasted till his death in 1905.

The manager of the railway encouraged volunteering amongst the railway employees, so that two companies of Volunteers were speedily formed at Ajmir, in which I took great interest ; they sometimes paraded with the Merwara Battalion, which was of advantage to both, even if the Volunteers were armed with the rifle. But although the construction of this important line of

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

communications in Rajputana brought benefits, it caused a great rise in prices owing to its increasing facilities of export for foodstuffs. This weighed hardly on the regiment, because although the rank-and-file received a small additional monthly allowance to compensate for the high cost of living, nothing was allowed them for their families.

Just at this juncture, moreover, the system under which Government controlled prices, which had existed in India since time immemorial and which the British had taken over from their predecessors, was altered. Under that system magistrates had fixed the prices of necessities of life in consultation with the *banias*.^{*} But now the Government allowed the *banias* to fix the prices in consultation with the magistrates, and the cost of living has risen since by leaps and bounds. *Banias* are the most shameless profiteers in existence. They are literate and they are few in number compared with the illiterate masses ; they possess the monopoly of the sale of foodstuffs, and they can easily combine to swindle the people. They have amassed vast riches since the old system was abandoned.

* Sellers of foodstuffs.

CHAPTER XII

THE AFGHAN WAR OF 1878-80 : FIRST PHASE

The British Mission turned back at Ali Masjid.—I become officiating commandant of the Merwara Battalion.—I proceed to Simla to try to arrange for its acceptance for active service.—The Mer head-men agree to take over the battalion's police duties if necessary.—The regiment volunteers officially.—Orders come for its move.—Breech-loading rifles taken over at Delhi.—Teaching their action to the men.—The regimental priest.—Jamrud.—Informal inspection in bivouacs by General Maude.—Unconventional behaviour of the men during this.—The General sees to it that the regiment gets a rum ration after its forced march.—On the line between Jamrud and Ali Masjid.—The Catch-em-alive-ohs.—My method of ensuring that these gentry did not play tricks.—Make friends with an Afridi head-man.—His story of how a blood-feud was avoided.—A punitive expedition into the Bazar Valley.—The inexpediency of such expeditions as a rule.—Experiences of this one.—Its effect.—I undertake a special reconnaissance.—Loyalty of Afridi friends.—A second punitive expedition into the Bazar Valley.—Subsequent arrangements with the Afridis with regard to the Khaibar Pass.—Dakka.—The action of a Political Officer there, and what it led to.—I proceed with a detachment to Kam Dakka.—My instructions.—Steps taken with regard to the head-man of the village.—The villagers in an awkward position.—We occupy a cemetery.—The Mohmands advance against us.—A critical struggle.—General Maude sends reinforcements to relieve us.—Their arrival.—A cavalry charge.—The reinforcements remain at a distance, and my detachment is ordered to join up with them.—An awkward retreat.—We join up with the reinforcements.—Retirement of the whole force on Dakka, followed up by the Mohmands.—General Maude's view of the affair, and his commendation of my detachment.—I am awarded the V.C. and am recommended for a brevet majority.—Delight of the men at their success, but they are badly treated as to pensions.—Comments on this.—Peace concluded with Yakub Khan.—The heat of Dakka.—The retirement from Jellalabad and the Khaibar.—A terrible march.—We take a cross-country route to Rawal Pindi.—A supposed case of cholera.—We receive an enthusiastic welcome on reaching Ajmir.

FROM early in 1878 the likelihood of a war with Afghanistan had become obvious, and in September the British mission which was to have proceeded to Kabul was stopped by the Amir's officials at Ali Masjid. This rendered a conflict almost certain. It so happened that just at this very time I became temporary commandant of the Merwara Battalion, the tenure of the commandant having expired, and also that, having completed twelve years' service, I was promoted captain. Major

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

F. Boileau, who had done brilliant service during the Mutiny, had been selected for the post ; but he was at the time second-in-command and officiating commandant of another Rajputana local corps, and as this meant higher pay he was allowed to remain where he was for the time being.

Determined to do all that was possible to have the regiment sent up to the front should hostilities break out, I went up to Simla on leave to try and arrange the matter. I found that there was a feeling against utilizing a local corps which had not moved from its station since the Mutiny, which furnished a number of local guards to the civil authority, and which, above all, was armed with muzzle-loading rifles. But I saw the Adjutant-General and assured him that all the difficulties could be got over except that of armament ; as regards this we were helpless, but he kindly promised to arrange for a supply of breech-loaders to the regiment should the Government decide to send us on service. So I returned to Ajmir, and on getting back summoned a meeting of the heads of all the Mer clans and explained to them the desire of the regiment to take part in the campaign and the difficulty that existed with regard to its guards on the Merwara roads and passes. The head-men at once said that they would undertake these with the aid of pensioned soldiers, and that they would do so without pay because they were anxious in the interests of the *izzat* (honour) of the Mers that their regiment should help the Government of India to fight the Afghans. They, moreover, said that during the absence of the regiment they did not want any other natives of India—"black men," as they put it—to be allowed into their country. They had never been conquered by Hindus or Musalmans, they said, and, were their country garrisoned by such, their *izzat* would be destroyed. "If the Government wishes us to do any other duty," they added, "we will do it. You know us and you can safely stake your honour on our promise."

Thus the main difficulty was solved, and, having officially volunteered the regiment's services for war through the usual channel (a long and complicated process, much more so than in England), and having acquainted Simla of the arrangement come to with the Mer head-men, I was informed that our offer would be accepted if we could make an early start. So everything was arranged, even to ordering trains to take the regiment

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

up to the railhead at Jhelam. This latter step was taken in fear and trembling, for, supposing that we had not gone, I should certainly have had to pay for the trains. But all came right. A telegram came to hand one morning, asking when we could start, to which the reply "This afternoon" was sent, and we actually moved off in two trains the following afternoon. At Delhi, the junction where we would change on to the broad-gauge line to the Punjab, an order met us to hand in our muzzle-loaders to the arsenal there and to receive breech-loaders in their place. This meant a delay of twenty-four hours, and we then moved on in a single train to Jhelam, beyond which point the railway to Rawal Pindi and Peshawar did not at that time extend.

The difficulty now was that the men did not understand how to work the breech-loader ; but this was got over by my getting the non-commissioned officers from their various carriages into mine and teaching them the mechanism myself, by detachments. They then returned to their compartments and instructed the men while we were on the move. Thus all ranks soon learnt how to use their new weapon, although they, of course, had had no opportunity of practising musketry therewith. This was a disadvantage, no doubt ; but I hoped that they would before long enjoy an opportunity of practising musketry in the field. And thus, under somewhat sketchy arrangements, did the first Rajputana local corps start on active service.

I took care that the regimental priest should accompany the regiment. It seemed obvious that the campaign would not prove a short one ; the men had never been away from their homes before and they might, therefore, suffer from home-sickness, and it was certain that through this good Brahmin I could exercise a beneficial influence upon their morale. Subsequent events proved that this was so, for the priest had been with the regiment for a considerable time and was greatly respected by the rank-and-file. He was still with the Merwaras when I saw the regiment as Commander-in-Chief in 1910. He has always been my friend, his influence has always been for good, and he is a loyal, simple-minded and honest man ; but such poor, although honourable, people do not meet with their reward under the Government of India, nor does that body understand or recognize what good they do even when told of it. As far as natives

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

are concerned, Government's rewards are reserved for the noisy sycophants who can flatter and who can deceive and misrepresent facts—a game which Indians of a certain type can play better than anybody I know.

In the meantime the period allowed to the Amir to give a satisfactory reply to the Government's ultimatum expired, and on the 20th of November columns invaded Afghanistan along the Khaibar line, by way of the Kurram Valley, and through the Bolan. On the Khaibar line, the fort of Ali Masjid was taken at once and the pass secured by the 1st Division under Sir Sam Browne, while the 2nd Division prepared to follow and to guard the communications. We proceeded by march route to Jamrud, and on the way up Major Boileau, who had naturally applied to take up the command, joined, together with several other British officers appointed to the regiment for the period of the war. None of them were acquainted with the Mers or with their language, and in all circumstances of difficulty and danger the men of the regiment looked to me, which made my position with the new commandant just a little difficult at first. But he soon came to understand it, and we worked together pleasantly during the campaign that followed.

Arriving at Jamrud towards the end of November we were brigaded with the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, which was commanded by Major-General Maude, V.C. (afterwards General Sir Frederick Maude, V.C., G.C.B. He was the father of the late Sir Stanley Maude, the conqueror of Baghdad). We joined his division at the end of a forced march of over thirty miles, during which not a single man fell out, and when we got in he informally inspected the battalion in its bivouacs. He walked round among the soldiers and made many inquiries regarding them. These Mer warriors were all honest, plain-spoken peasants, who were rugged like their native hills. They had only rarely seen a general, and their method of receiving this one was not that of more sophisticated troops. They did not stand solemnly at attention, looking to their front at nothing. On the contrary they followed him round in little groups, gazing at him and offering an occasional remark when he spoke to the Mer officers. They behaved, in fact, just as was to be expected from an irregular corps of country bumpkins, which greatly amused him, and he at once appreciated their good qualities.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

As I was the only British officer who understood their patois, he took me round with him to interpret. He inquired of the Mer officers if he could do anything for the regiment, to which they replied : " Yes, Sahib, we have done a long march ; order us a ration of rum all round." To this request he consented, upon which one of them remarked : " The General Sahib will order the Commissariat Sahib to issue the rum, and he will pass the order on to his babu, who will say the issue is against regulations and will produce a bullock-load of them in proof. By the time he finishes with his books and his arguments we, by the good fortune of the General Sahib, will be in Kabul. So we will not get the rum except the General Sahib is kind enough to go to the store himself and tell the babu that if he does not issue it at once he will be hanged." In translating these remarks I explained to General Maude that the men were peasants, long accustomed to talk freely with me, and that they had suffered much at the hands of various babus whom, as a class, they distrusted. He, as the officer had suggested, accompanied a party to the commissariat store and the rum was issued at once in his presence. By his kind manner and the sympathetic way in which he spoke to them, our chief gained the confidence of every man in the battalion.

The 2nd Brigade was put on duty on the line between Jamrud and Ali Masjid, and I was for some time afterwards employed in charge of convoy escorts between those two places. It was no soft job, for the Zakka Khel Afridis, ever on the look-out for loot, attacked the convoys whenever they got an opening ; and when they could pick up stragglers they cut the throats of these and mutilated them. The Afridis have latterly become more civilized, and in recent campaigns against us they have, after making prisoners, treated the captives well. To prevent their attempts on convoys traversing the pass, the Political Officers had enlisted a corps of friendlies from amongst the tribesmen, who came to be known to British soldiers as the " Catch-em-alive-ohs "—so called because one of their duties was supposed to be to catch those who interrupted our communications or who interfered with small parties of soldiers as they passed along. A short experience of this corps convinced me that its personnel was in league with all the rascals hanging about the hills on the flanks of our communications, and that instead of catching

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the marauders they were giving the *badmashes* information and going shares in what was picked up. This they could easily do, seeing that they were placed on picquet on commanding heights from which they could signal to their raiding colleagues. Determined that they should not score off me, I got hold of one of their head-men, told him that I quite understood their game, promised that if attacked I should fire on the nearest of their picquets, and informed him that he might let his confrères know. He smiled grimly, and expatiated on the Afridis' virtues and on their sense of honour ; but he saw that I was not to be taken in.

This threat was carried out the first time that an attack on my convoy was attempted—which got me into trouble with the Politicals ; but it otherwise had very good results. My convoys were not often attacked after that. I later made friends with this head-man, and he shortly afterwards attached himself to me and did me very well. He gave me lessons in Pushtu, and was a clever and amusing man, who told good stories about frontier tribes and their ways of dealing with one another and with the sahibs. One of these anecdotes admirably illustrates Pathan habits of thought and deserves to be repeated in his own words :

“ You know, Sahib,” said he, “ my home is in a village near the mouth of the Pass and water is scarce, for there is only one well. The house of a friend of mine, who had been in Government service, and its tower command this well on one side. The other side is commanded by the tower of another man, and this man got hold of a new rifle which he wanted to test ; so whenever messengers went from my friend's house for water he let drive at them. After a few days this got very tedious, and my friend's household begged him to stop the outrage. The only way to do so was to shoot the offender, but that would have made a blood-feud between the families, and the offender's family were powerful. My friend resolved to go and remonstrate with the owner of the rifle, and he did so several times without result. However, he thought better to try one last remonstrance, and if this failed to shoot the disturber. So he went to the disturber's house, and found him asleep with the rifle by his side. My friend thought, ‘ Now is my chance. I'll slay him.’ But, you see, my friend had served the *sirkar* (Government), and in its service one learns wisdom. So he took the rifle ; on finding it was loaded,



IN THE KHAIBAR BELOW ALI MASJID, 1879.

To face p. 142.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

filled it half up to the muzzle with mud and replaced it beside the sleeper, and then returned to his house. When he thought that the sleeper would have awakened he sent a servant to draw water. The troubler of the peace took a shot. The rifle burst, killing him on the spot. A blood-feud was avoided and the trouble ended. The disturber of the peace had been accidentally killed. The service of the *sirkar* makes fools into wise men. Has not the poet said: 'In their own house there will not be two brothers together who have not in their hearts a thousand quarrels.' Could they be settled accidentally, how much bloodshed would be avoided among us Pathans. Verily, the service of the Great Government teaches wisdom."

The outrages of the Zakka Khel Afridis became so inconvenient that it was decided to send a punitive force into their country, the Bazar Valley. Punitive expeditions depend for their success on surprise, and this hardly ever comes off because the tribesmen have an excellent system of espionage. Previous to undertaking such expeditions the Political Officers consult their petty officials. The intention thus becomes known, and before the troops can reach their objective everything of value has been carried off to a place of safety. All that can be done then is to destroy the towers, villages, cultivation and fruit trees, to extract a fine of money and arms and then to retire. As a rule the money that the troops spend pays for the fine and, in addition, gives ample compensation for the damage done. The success or failure of an expedition can be gauged by whether the tribesmen follow up the expeditionary force or not, on its withdrawal from their territory.

Such expeditions are fortunately now rare. If they cannot effect a surprise, and if the troops engaged cannot live on the country, they are of little value for securing the good behaviour of the tribesmen. Sometimes a punitive expedition is necessary, but as a rule there are wiser methods of procedure available, and, now that we know the tribesmen better and that numbers of them take service in the Indian Army, the need for such undertakings should seldom arise. The restlessness of the mountain clans mostly arises from hunger, and the remedy for this is more employment. It often arises also from fear of annexation, and in that case the remedy is to convince the tribesmen of our good faith. Blockade, and temporary exclusion

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

from British territory, when they can be put in force, are more efficient than expeditions into the Pathan country. In the present state of their civilization, all dealings with these people should be conducted by sympathetic British officers and not through petty officials, and especially not through Hindus, whom they hold in contempt.

The punitive expedition into the Bazar Valley under the command of General Maude consisted of two small columns of all arms. One, starting from Dakka, entered by the Chinar and Sisovi Passes, and the other, starting from Ali Masjid, did so by the Chora and Walai Passes. My battalion had been previously moved from Jamrud to Ali Masjid, and four hundred men from it formed part of the Ali Masjid Column, which General Maude accompanied. The intended surprise, as usual, didn't come off. Both columns got into the Bazar Valley unopposed, but all the villages were found deserted. Large quantities of grain and other supplies were, however, found, and they were destroyed after the requirements of the troops had been satisfied. The villages and towers were then razed to the ground and the troops retired, hotly followed up by the enemy; but the retirement was skilfully carried out and our losses were small. The political effect of the expedition was, not only to further aggravate the Zakka Khels, but also to secure them the sympathy and support of all the other Afridi clans, so that the depredations on our communications became worse. It was quite evident to everyone that some other measures were necessary for the protection of the line.

The Brigade to which my battalion was attached was commanded by Major-General Appleyard, C.B.—a Crimean officer—and consisted, besides it, of a battery of Field Artillery, a company of Madras Sappers, the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and the 2nd Gurkhas. As it was now December the weather was very cold and from this the Madras Sappers, enlisted in the hot south, suffered a good deal. General Appleyard now called for an officer to survey the country between Ali Masjid and the Walai Pass which leads some ten miles to the east, over high mountains. I volunteered for the job and was accepted. It was not an easy undertaking, but under the guidance of my Pushtu instructor, I carried it out successfully. His idea was that we should travel very light and that the party should only

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

consist of ourselves and two friends of his. I was to go along the tops of the mountains where no natives would be met, only descending so low as was absolutely necessary to enable me to make my survey. In the meantime, he or one of his friends could always go into the valley or villages and could bring me any information I wanted, as no one would suspect them.

We started off, I armed with a revolver, plane-table and prismatic compass, and clothed in a poshteen—the latter is a sheepskin coat in common use among Pathans who wear it day and night during the cold weather. Their poshteens are therefore usually very dirty and thickly inhabited. The Pathans say themselves that when the hot weather begins and they discard their sheepskin cloaks, these obliging garments will, if at a long distance from home, walk there. My Afridi friends served me well and faithfully, as I have always found they do if one treats them kindly, for like most other people they return kindness with gratitude. During the time that they were with me (nearly a week) they might easily have cut my throat and annexed my revolver, or might have betrayed my presence to other tribesmen who would at once have killed me. When I returned I recommended them for a money reward, but the Intelligence Department could only run to ten rupees (thirteen shillings and fourpence) for each of them. This I was ashamed to offer them, so I gave them each a suitable present myself.

About a month later another punitive expedition, this time on a much larger scale and fortunately also under the command of General Maude, was sent against the Zakka Khels. It consisted of five columns, starting from different places and converging on the Bazar Valley. When the columns concentrated there, it was found that all the Afridi clans had collected to oppose any further advance. Government had left it to the general to decide what he would do. He saw that an Afridi War on the top of the one in which we were already engaged was most undesirable, for there were not enough troops to carry on both, and he also saw that there were other and better methods of dealing with the tribesmen. He therefore made satisfactory terms with the Zakka Khels and when he withdrew his troops they were not followed up on retirement.

Although the Afridis gave some little trouble during the next year, General Maude had set an example of the proper way to

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

deal with them. An agreement was arrived at in 1881, by which the independence of the Afridi tribes under British suzerainty was recognized, and the tribesmen undertook to keep the Khaibar Pass open and to abstain from outrages in British Territory in return for an annual subsidy of 85,860 rupees (£5,724). This arrangement has since proved eminently satisfactory, and the Government of India in their dealings with the Khaibar tribesmen owe more to the wisdom of General Sir Frederick Maude than to that of the Indian Foreign Department, which in this case followed the example that he had set. It is a great misfortune that they have not done so more frequently.

My battalion was now ordered to Dakka, a mud fort built in the centre of a small, cup-like plain which is commanded within rifle range on three sides by high, rocky, barren hills, whose sole inhabitants then were myriads of fleas. The Kabul river runs at about five hundred yards distance from the fort on the fourth side. The climate here is renowned for extreme heat that is intensified by night by refraction from the hills. It has been a halting place for caravans for ages and the limited space around the fort was filthy. Of all the hot and dirty places I have been in—and they are not few—Dakka was certainly, hands down, the worst. In addition to the heat, periodic invasions on the part of fleas from the neighbouring hills added to its horrors; so ferocious were the attacks of these insects that some of the men had to go to hospital.

The various channels of the Kabul river extend here to a width of about two thousand yards, and on the far side is situated Lalpura, the capital of the principal Mohmand chief, who professed to be friendly but who was a relative and adherent of the Amir, so that he had to be watched. To assist us in doing this a Political Officer had been appointed to the garrison, which consisted of two companies of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, a British field battery, two squadrons of the 10th Bengal Lancers, and my battalion. Reference to the peculiar position of Political Officers has already been made in Chapter VII., and the evil of the system was exemplified by my experiences at Dakka. The Mohmands had been giving trouble on the line of communications and elsewhere within the British border, and in February information was brought to our "Political" that a large force of them was in our neighbourhood bent on mischief.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

Accordingly a reconnaissance was made in the direction of Kam Dakka, a small village on the south bank of the Kabul river about seven miles east of Dakka, where they were said to have concentrated in force. But no sign of them was to be seen. The Political Officer, however, said that the villagers of Kam Dakka, whom he had interviewed, were friendly, that they were expecting an attack at any moment and that they had asked for immediate protection against a large gathering of Mohmands who were assembled on the other side of the river. These trans-frontier villages are invariably friendly when the British force operating in the neighbourhood is strong, but at other times they are not always to be trusted. The Political Officer, however, considered that a garrison ought to be put into Kam Dakka, so one hundred men of my regiment under my command were detailed for this duty, much against the wish of the officer commanding at Dakka.

I was told to take out entrenching tools and three days' provisions for the detachment. I very much doubted both the discretion of the Political Officer and the friendly intentions of the villagers, and I therefore insisted, in spite of his opposition and that of some others, upon substituting extra ammunition for the entrenching tools and rations. I pointed out that owing to the country being rocky it was unsuitable for digging, and that so long as the villagers had rations I and my men would not be without them. Well, indeed, it was for me that I insisted on having my way, for had I not done so, I would not be writing this story.

I was ordered to march for Kam Dakka one evening at 5 p.m. and to garrison that village. As the road was very bad and the night was dark we did not arrive till eleven o'clock, although we had to cover only some seven miles. I at once interviewed the head-man who, as I expected, told me that he had only made his request for protection on condition that a strong force should be sent, whereas a very weak one had been sent. He said that the Mohmands were gathered in large numbers across the river and that they would come over during the night and cut all our throats, his own included if he did not join them, and that I had better clear out at once and get back to Dakka. Having my orders in view, I of course could not accept this advice, which nevertheless appeared to be very sound. However,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

I resolved that this man should share my fate whatever it might be, and so I told him he was made a prisoner with some of his head-men, and the rest of the villagers were informed that I would shoot the prisoners directly the villagers attacked me.

The villagers were in a difficult position. If they attacked me, their head-man and his friends would be in danger. If they left me alone they would themselves certainly be killed when the Mohmands came across the river—as the Mohmands undoubtedly would. But that could not be helped. It was not my fault, and my duty was to carry out the orders received and in doing so to protect my own men to the best of my ability. I made my dispositions accordingly and, being tired out, went to sleep, leaving a native officer and an old fellow-sportsman on the look-out, with orders to send out periodical patrols and to awake me as soon as the Mohmands appeared on our side of the river. This they did about 4 a.m., after I had had a short snooze.

I had taken up a nice position in a Mahomedan cemetery on the banks of the Kabul river, and had got my men settled down near plenty of water to drink—an absolute necessity in the prevailing heat—and so made all comfortable. I had already sent back news of the impending attack to Dakka and had asked for more ammunition to be sent to me. A party of some thirty men of my regiment arrived with ammunition at about 8 a.m. and they brought a message from the officer commanding at Dakka, saying that we must not expect any reinforcements that day, so I had to make the best of a rather difficult position. Shortly after the arrival of this extra ammunition, the Mohmands began their attack on us, aided, of course, by the villagers. The fighting was pretty hot; and so indeed was the weather, which did not improve matters. I had to deliver several attacks with the bayonet with part of my command, leaving the other part to hold the post. The difficulty was that whenever I led an attack (and I had to lead them all) my men all wanted to be with me. I was, therefore, very much afraid that while I was out on one of these sorties, the men left to garrison the post might all run out to join in the fray, and that the Mohmands—who had by this time surrounded us—would get into the post. We eventually found ourselves in a very tight corner, for ammunition was failing and it became necessary to rely more and more on the bayonet.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

Most fortunately for us, General Maude, who was at Landi Kotal about ten miles away, was made aware of our somewhat critical situation, and he at once ordered a strong force to march to our relief. Its component parts came from various points, and they consisted of a squadron of the 10th Bengal Lancers, of a mountain battery, of four companies (I think) of the Suffolk Regiment, of some men of the 5th Fusiliers, of a battalion of the 5th Ghurkas, and of some two hundred men of my regiment from Dakka. The various units composing this force gradually assembled on the spur of a hill that was over a mile from the spot where we were engaged. The command kept changing with the arrival of each fresh unit, and until the whole force was concentrated nobody knew who was the senior officer. Valuable time was lost in finding this out, and in the meantime our position had become critical.

By 3 p.m. we only had a very few rounds left per rifle, but I was then pleased to notice that the Mohmands were moving off to some extent, from which I concluded that reinforcements were coming up. So the men in reserve who were holding the cemetery were ordered no longer to spare ammunition, of which it had previously been necessary to be most careful, while with the remainder of our little force I counter-attacked more vigorously than ever. Soon afterwards the reinforcements began to appear on the skyline of high ground about a mile off, as mentioned above, and then the Lancer Squadron came up and concealed themselves very skilfully in the bed of the river. From this point the cavalry delivered a sudden charge across our front, which we supported with a bayonet charge delivered by every man who could be spared from the defence of the cemetery. The Mohmands thereupon retreated in haste from our front ; those who were posted on hills to our right and commanding our position, however, maintained their fire on us. Leaving the Lancers to deal with the tribesmen who were in flight, I returned to the defensive post and was there joined by a Political Officer who had accompanied the relieving force. He was an ex-military officer of the Punjab Police who was temporarily employed in the Political Department during the war and who knew the frontier well. He is now Major-General L. H. E. Tucker, C.I.E.

We both thought that the large reinforcements that had by

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

this time come up would attack and finish off the Mohmands, who had already been pretty well hammered and who were on the wrong side (from their point of view) of a river which was at that time by no means easy to cross. But not a bit of it. The relieving force did not make any proper advance, the artillery merely shelled the enemy from the high ground where the force had assembled, and only a single battalion was allowed to move forward a couple of hundred yards or so, during which it sustained a very few casualties. I was, moreover, greatly to my disgust, ordered to retire on the reinforcements. As soon as the Mohmands perceived that these were not advancing they became encouraged, and they vigorously attacked my small party from all directions except the rear; for the cavalry had retired from my neighbourhood and had joined the rest of the reinforcements. Under circumstances such as these, retreat on the part of a small detachment was not an easy operation. We had some thirty killed and wounded to get away—we could not leave the dead, for the Mohmands would have mutilated them—so I had to organize my men as two parties which would alternately retire and cover the retirement of each other. It was getting dusk, there was no officer in the detachment sufficiently skilful to command a party under such circumstances, and it, moreover, seemed doubtful whether the men would obey the orders of one of their own sort in conditions so trying. So I asked Captain Tucker if he would kindly command one party for me. This he readily consented to do.

Thus, by effecting alternate retirements, we reached the high ground on which the reinforcements had taken up their position, bringing with us all our impedimenta and leaving the enemy nothing. On our joining up with the reinforcements the retirement of the whole force on Dakka was ordered and it began at once. There were great difficulties in carrying the movement out because of the attacks of the enemy, of the badness of the road, of the delay caused by moving transport animals and wounded, and of the failing light. The rear-guard did not reach Dakka till 9.30 p.m. It would have been much more simple to have attacked and finished off the enemy, whose position, with a deep river in their rear over which they could not escape, made it practically certain that we would have got them all. And such was General Maude's opinion.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

No doubt the officer who eventually commanded the force sent to relieve me was in a somewhat difficult position. He did not know the ground, he had no staff, it was getting dusk when he arrived, and his command arrived piecemeal and was quite unorganized. General Maude, while taking all these things into consideration, nevertheless disapproved of his action ; but he highly praised my detachment. He was pleased to say they had behaved with signal bravery, and several of them on my recommendation were awarded the Indian Order of Merit or got special promotion. When all had done so well it was difficult to pick out special cases for distinctions. The general recommended me for the Victoria Cross, which Her late Majesty Queen Victoria was graciously pleased to confer on me, and also the brevet rank of major. He, moreover, severely rebuked the Political Officer who had placed a small detachment of troops in such an unfavourable position. We were indeed lucky to have suffered so few casualties, a fact which I attribute to the ancient rifles and to the bad shooting of our enemies. I got a bullet through my hat, one in the heel of my boot, my water-bottle was smashed, my binoculars were hit while I was looking through them, and my horse was shot through the back. But I was unhurt.

My men were hugely pleased. They now felt confident that they would get the regular rates of pension for which they were so anxious, this not only on account of the money, but also on account of the *izzat* that they would gain by its concession. It was not to be, however. Only those who were still serving long years afterwards, when local corps were made part of the regular army, got these rates of pension. There were some of the men who had fought at Kam Dakka still alive and on the reduced pension when I was Commander-in-Chief. Just before my leaving India I at their request made a representation on their behalf, asking the Government of India to reconsider their case. The result I do not know. Such instances as this of petty meanness account for the belief, which is unfortunately so prevalent amongst Indian soldiers, that they are not nowadays being well treated by a Government which prefers to lavish its money and its rewards upon civilians. We are by our action in this matter turning from us the hearts of the Indian aristocracy and of the priesthood both Hindu and Musalman. It is due to a disregard

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

of Indian manners and customs, and it is being done by direction of *les avocats et philosophes* who rule the country, a class who the great Emperor Napoleon pointed out long ago were the ruination of nations. By so acting we are raising unnecessary difficulties for ourselves in the country which is the easiest in the world for a foreign government to rule.

We remained at Dakka a long time, doing line of communications work there till the end of May, by which date the heat had become intense. Cholera was reported from all stations between Jamrud and Jellalabad, and also from many places in the Punjab; in Dakka there was much of it, but no man of my regiment was attacked.

About the end of May we heard that a treaty of peace had been concluded with Amir Yakub Khan, son of the late Amir Shere Ali, who had fled from Kabul in the previous December and had died in Afghan Turkestan. Among other conditions the new Amir agreed, much against his will, to receive a British Envoy at his Court. When we heard that this Treaty had been concluded we hoped that the troops would not be ordered to march home at such a period of intense heat, especially as we were told that on account of the late season the evacuation of Kandahar was to be postponed till the autumn. We were, however, not to be so fortunate as the troops at Kandahar. Had we been we could have been easily cantooned on the northern slopes of the Safed Koh range, where a salubrious climate prevails. The natives themselves avoid the Khaibar and the country between it and Jellalabad during the great heat. Dakka has an especially bad name among them; the mullah who had commanded the Mohmands against me at Kam Dakka so commiserated with me on having to bear the intense heat that he periodically sent me a donkey-load of ice with a polite message. The purport of the message always was that he did so because I had fought well against him, which shows that there is chivalry to be found on the North-West Frontier—as everywhere else among brave men.

The war was unpopular at home, and the Government of India was anxious to evacuate northern Afghanistan, and especially the Khaibar, with a view to the political effect at home. The immediate withdrawal of the Peshawar Valley Field Force was therefore ordered and the troops began their march back

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : First Phase

to India in the month of June, the hottest season of the year. In the cool climate of Simla the Government of India perhaps did not quite realize what this meant, but, however that may be, our retirement was carried out in the burning heat of summer through territory which is notoriously unhealthy, and in which cholera was raging at the time. The result was an appalling loss of life amongst both British and native soldiers and also amongst the camp-followers. Cholera in its most virulent form, as well as heat-apoplexy, decimated the troops. Their sufferings were terrible beyond description and the medical arrangements were disgraceful. Bad as they are described to have been in Mesopotamia in 1915-16, they were worse for the troops on this dreadful march. Ali Masjid—the narrowest gorge of the Khaibar—was a charnel-house, where the sights one saw were heart-rending beyond description ; and almost the same might be said of nearly all the camping-grounds where the troops halted between Dakka and the rail-head at Jhelam. The Government of India, however, was not in the least perturbed by the dreadful experience undergone by the troops. No one was even asked the reason why. It took thirty-seven years and the terrible scandal of Mesopotamia before the Government of India altered its military medical administration, and they only did so then under the pressure of public opinion in England.

On the arrival of my regiment at Jamrud, at the Indian end of the Khaibar, the commanding officer took short leave, and I was left in command, with a couple of the attached officers to help me. The remainder had been ordered to rejoin their own regiments. After we had crossed the Indus at Attock, I left the cholera-infected road on my right and took a cross-country line through uninfected country to Rawal Pindi. On our first day's march, one of my men was attacked with sickness, which the medical officer diagnosed as cholera. I ought, according to orders, to have sent him to the cholera hospital at Attock. But had I done so I felt certain he would have died, and therefore decided to carry him along on a stretcher and to do the best that could be done for him with the regiment. I got him as far as Rawal Pindi, where the medical officer's report had to be sent in, and the General Officer Commanding made me leave the stricken man in hospital there and wiggled me for disobedience of orders.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

We continued our journey to Jhelam across country and, arriving at that station without any other case of cholera, we were put into the train, and in due course we arrived safely in Ajmir without having had a single case of cholera in the regiment during this march except the man I had been forced to leave at Rawalpindi. And he was the first person who received me at the Ajmir railway station! The medical officer, having cholera on the brain, had made a wrong diagnosis. Anyway, it was a great joy to me to see the "case" fit and well. The one safe means by which bodies of troops can avoid cholera, or can shake it off once it has broken out among them, is by moving daily from infected places. Had all the troops done as we did, many lives would almost certainly have been saved. I believe that my regiment was the only unit which took part in this retirement of the Khaibar Field Force without undergoing a more or less serious epidemic of the disease. The men did not quite know whether to put down their good luck in the matter to my *ickbal* (fortune) or to the invocations of their priest, and they ended by attributing it to a combination of both.

The people of Ajmir and Merwara heartily welcomed the regiment back again and they gave it a great reception. The head-men and pensioners of the Mer clan had performed the duties that they had undertaken during its absence to the complete satisfaction of Government. This cordially thanked them, but it did not give them any more substantial reward.

CHAPTER XIII

THE AFGHAN WAR OF 1878-80 : SECOND PHASE

The Embassy to Kabul—Yakub Khan.—The attack upon the Mission and its massacre.—The Amir not to blame.—His surrender to General Roberts.—My acquaintance with him subsequently.—An appreciation.—Appointed D.A.A.G. in the Kurram.—Condition of things there on my arrival.—General Roberts' daring advance to Kabul.—Our force left in the Kurram.—Position at Ali Khel.—The Political Officer on the spot.—His difficulties and his unsuitability.—His unnecessary anxiety as to the position.—Alarmist reports.—A night-attack upon the place easily beaten off.—A Sikh regiment arrives after a forced march.—Withdrawal from the Hariob.—General Tytler.—Am promoted A.Q.M.G.—General John Watson.—Expedition to Zawa under General Tytler.—His death.—Picking up information, and some sport.—The Pathans.—Abdul Rahman placed on the throne of Afghanistan.—The arrangement made as regards the Kurram.—Maiwand and the siege of Kandahar.—The question of our force relieving Kilat-i-Ghilzai.—My scheme for this.—It is not accepted.—End of the war, and wise policy then adopted as regards increasing our responsibilities beyond the Indus.—Some comments with regard to the army placed in the field in 1878-80.—Dual control at headquarters and interference by the Governor-General.—False economy.

SHORTLY after returning to Ajmir I took leave to the Himalayan jungles in order to get cool after the recent grilling, and news came soon afterwards that an embassy under Sir L. Cavagnari, with an escort, had been sent to Kabul. Many in India who understood the situation in Afghanistan were in grave doubt as to the wisdom of this step. For they feared that the escort, while not strong enough to resist attack, was weak enough to invite it. And so it proved. On the 3rd of September riots broke out in the city, the residency was attacked, after a gallant resistance it was taken, and the members of the mission and escort were massacred.

There is no reason to believe that this crime was premeditated or that the Amir, Yakub Khan, was to blame. At the beginning of the fray the envoy sent him a message telling him what was taking place, and the Amir did what he could; but he seems to have completely lost control both of his troops and of the city mob. He had in his earlier days been a gallant soldier and

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

a successful general ; but when he had ascended the throne in the previous May he had not been strong either mentally or physically, for he had only a few months previously been released by his father, Shere Ali, from a long and severe imprisonment in an ill-ventilated dungeon, from the effects of which he did not recover for some considerable time. He had lost many of his most powerful supporters during his incarceration, and until he had gained others—a matter of time, especially in face of such an unpopular action as receiving a British embassy—he was very insecure on the throne. I made his acquaintance in India in after years, was on friendly terms with him while I was Commander-in-Chief, and always treated him with the consideration due to his misfortunes and his high rank.

He told me that he had represented his difficulties to the Political Officer with whom he had concluded the treaty of peace, under which he had been recognized as Amir by the British Government. He had then expressed his willingness to receive an embassy later, when he would be more firmly fixed on the throne ; but he had begged not to have it forced upon him at so inopportune a moment. His representations had, however, been disregarded. He maintained that he could have had no possible object in instigating the attack upon the residency, or in not doing what was possible to stop it ; for he was well aware that the ruler of Afghanistan could not maintain his position without the support of the British Government. "The only thing I repent of," he added, "is not having firmly refused to accept the embassy at the time I agreed to it, and my only excuse for this is that when I did I was weak in body and mind after my long imprisonment." Those who forced the British mission on him at so unsuitable a time committed a grave error of judgment. The last time I saw him he seemed contented with his lot, which he accepted philosophically ; his great trouble then was that his eldest son had accepted Christianity.*

On hearing the bad news from Kabul and learning that Sir F. Roberts had been ordered to advance from the Kurram Valley, I applied for service in the field and was appointed

* Yakub Khan had arrived in Sir F. Roberts' camp, with his eldest son and some sirdars, when the British army was advancing on Kabul, and had surrendered. A few weeks later he had been sent down to India as a State prisoner.

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : Second Phase

Deputy-Assistant-Adjutant-General under Brigadier T. E. Gordon, who was to assume command in the valley after the departure of the Kabul Field Force. So I proceeded to Jhelam and there found the most complete confusion prevailing. Officers were there in hundreds trying to get to their various regiments and appointments, and it was difficult to secure a seat in the tonga which took one to Kohat. From that point I continued my journey to Ali Khel by horse-dāk.

Transport for the advancing force was deficient, as it usually is with the Indian Army. On this occasion the Government, never having anticipated the massacre of the embassy although nearly everybody else had, were taken completely by surprise when the news arrived ; it came upon them like a bolt from the blue. General Roberts had commanded the force in the Kurram most successfully during the previous campaign, and the army which he took with him to Kabul was composed of units from his old command, numbering in all about six thousand, five hundred men, who assembled at Ali Khel. Of his many achievements I have always thought that his capture of the Afghan capital with this little army was the most brilliant. It entailed the march of a comparatively small force a distance of over seventy miles through most difficult mountain country which was practically unknown, but was inhabited by the most warlike, fanatical, and well-armed people in Afghanistan. These had risen *en masse* to oppose the British advance. Such a theatre of operations affords every advantage to a people in arms against regular troops. It, moreover, was not known whether the Afghans would be commanded by the Amir or not ; had he led them the operation would have been even more difficult than it actually proved to be.

When Sir Frederick advanced Brigadier-General Gordon was left in command of the troops in the Kurram and Hariob Valleys. They consisted of two batteries of artillery, two regiments of cavalry and about four thousand infantry. With these we had to maintain the line of communication between the Shutargardan Pass and Thal, a distance of about seventy miles. Although this line may seem long for such a small force to guard, the number of troops left to maintain it was ample, for the Turi inhabitants of Kurram are bound to be loyal to the British, being Shia Musalmans who are at enmity with all their Sunni neighbours ; these, latter were, moreover, then mostly but poorly

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

armed. The quality of some of the native troops left behind was indifferent ; but there were most excellent regiments among them and I was surprised that Sir Frederick Roberts did not take two or three more of these with him. This, I think, his chivalry alone prevented him from doing. As it was, once he advanced with his weak force, his situation was always precarious, while ours who remained behind was perfectly safe. We had three guns, two companies of British infantry and two weak battalions of Indian infantry at Ali Khel, with some fifty sowars, details of Indian cavalry regiments waiting to join Sir Frederick Roberts. The rest of the Kurram force garrisoned various places between Ali Khel and Thal.

At Ali Khel, its headquarters, immense heaps of stores of all kinds were scattered about, and the position on the departure of the Kabul troops was much too extended for the reduced number of its garrison. General Gordon therefore ordered our position to be curtailed to a perimeter suitable to our reduced numbers. This work, which I had to supervise, entailed a good deal of labour. When it was completed however—fortunately before any attack was delivered by the enemy—the position had become one of enormous strength and was indeed impregnable against an enemy unprovided with artillery, like the tribesmen.

The Government of India keeps an enormous establishment of Political Officers, although this is no longer necessary owing to the rapidity of travel and the efficient post and telegraph system now existing. Soldiers used not to be considered fit for employment as Intelligence Officers in the field, so Political Officers were usually told off instead—why I don't know. For military officers of the Indian Army are certainly much more in touch with natives and have a greater knowledge of them than the Political Officers can have. Nevertheless, the latter were always showered on forces in the field. Military knowledge is necessary in order to gauge information correctly, and this Political Officers naturally do not possess ; they invariably think of numbers alone, and they are surrounded by petty civil officers and by "friendlies," whose reports are usually concocted to serve their own ends. As I have already said, the Political Officers had up till now been the colleagues of the generals to whom they were attached, and not merely their advisers. They not

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : Second Phase

infrequently had received instructions direct from the Government of India, the purport of which the general might or might not know ; so that a sort of dual command had existed. The result had been so bad in the previous campaign that this was now changed and they were put on the staff of generals and were made subordinate to them. Some generals did not at first fully accept their new responsibilities but continued to lean on their Political Officers—a name which is in itself misleading. “ Intelligence ” officer better describes their functions.

The vernacular of the people among whom we were in the field is Pushtu. The Political Officer attached to Brigadier-General Gordon's staff did not know the language and he therefore had to carry on his dealings with them through his petty officials or through some “ friendlies ” who spoke Persian, which language he did know. He therefore laboured under a great disadvantage. In war-time a great part of the information that is received is contradictory, a still greater part is false, and by far the most part is of doubtful character—in gauging it the law of probability can be the only guide. A man who does not know the language of the people he has to deal with is naturally in difficulties, but he is in still greater difficulties when his interpreters—probably for their own advantage—make reports which they confirm by other reports, all of which are lies or exaggerations. Then, again, errors of judgment will occur. Such was the case with our Political Officer. The reports which he received were most alarming, and he imagined armies of tribesmen in tens of thousands all round us, ever on the point of attacking. These tribesmen were no doubt excited and were prepared to attack us when they could do so under favourable conditions. But with them, mobilization is attended with considerable difficulties—not the least of which are shortage of food and inter-tribal jealousies and feuds. Our position in reality was impregnable and we were in no danger.

But from the day that the Kabul Field Force advanced our Political Officer began pumping our supposed dreadful position into the general, and he induced our chief to believe that it was urgently necessary to ask for reinforcements. When ordered to draw up a telegram to Army Headquarters to this effect, I pointed out the futility of such a proceeding, seeing that, even if the anticipations of the Political Officer came off (which I didn't

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

believe possible), no troops were near enough to come to our relief before we were attacked. The general thereupon ordered the Political Officer to draw up the telegram and to dispatch it to the Foreign Department of the Government of India, which was done. I do not think that the Government were pleased at its receipt, but they nevertheless prevailed upon Army Headquarters to order a regiment of the Punjab Frontier Force (which could ill be spared at the time from its station, Bannu) to make a forced march for Ali Khel, and it did not arrive till after we had beaten and effectually dispersed our enemies.

The alarmist reports of the Political Officer naturally spread about the garrison, and they were kept on tenter-hooks, the more so as they had for some time been ordered to sleep fully accoutred. After this sort of thing had been going on for some days, and after we had suffered many false alarms, I one night divested myself of my pants and boots about 3 a.m. on returning from visiting the guards, picquets and sentries, and lay down in a pair of pink silk pyjamas. Scarcely had I done so when an attack was delivered by a considerable body of tribesmen—about three thousand of them—and I had to join in the fray just as I was, my conspicuously-coloured nether-garments giving rise to much banter on the part of my brother-officers. The Pathans carried out this attempt with no little determination. But they came under heavy gun and rifle fire, were smartly counter-attacked with the bayonet, and fled after a brief conflict leaving some thirty dead and wounded behind them. They were so cowed by their experiences on this occasion that they never raised their heads against us again. Our losses in the affair only amounted to six men slightly wounded.

A couple of days later the reinforcing regiment turned up from Bannu. It had made prolonged marches over bad roads with the utmost speed possible in order to succour us in our imaginary difficulties; no transport had been procurable at the start, so the regiment had collected all the donkeys that could be found along the road, and when it marched into our camp it presented a most extraordinary spectacle. Most of the soldiers were very tall Sikhs and many of them were mounted on very small donkeys, so that their usual solemnity of demeanour was quite neutralized by the absurdity of their appearance.

Shortly after the defeat of the tribesmen, the Shutargardan

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : Second Phase

route became closed by snow, and the line of communication of the Kabul Field Force was then transferred to the Khaibar. The Hariob was then abandoned, and our most advanced position came to be the Peiwar Kotal. Brigadier-General Gordon's services were now required in India, and he was replaced in command of the Kurram Field Force by Brigadier-General John Watson, V.C., C.B. (later General Sir John Watson, V.C., G.C.B.). The force was at the same time reorganized into two brigades ; one under Brigadier-General John Gordon, C.B. (afterwards General Sir John Gordon, G.C.B., a member of the Council of India), and the other under Brigadier-General Tytler, V.C., C.B., who was then considered the greatest master of mountain warfare in the Indian Army ; to the great regret of all who served with him, he died at Thul a few months afterwards of pneumonia, after successfully carrying out the Zaimukht Expedition. I was at the same time promoted to Assistant-Quarter-Master-General of the Force, and Lieutenant-Colonel A. P. Palmer (afterwards General Sir A. P. Palmer, G.C.B.) was appointed Assistant-Adjutant-General ; it was an odd coincidence that he preceded Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief in India and that I eventually succeeded to the same position.

Brigadier-General John Watson had distinguished himself greatly during the Mutiny. He had at that time been a Captain in the 13th Bengal Cavalry, which he had raised and which is now called the Duke of Connaught's Own, Watson's Horse. He had served with the Indian force sent to Europe in 1878, and had in the previous campaign commanded the Punjab Chiefs' Contingent on the Kurram line of communications. He had filled many political appointments in Feudatory States during intervals between periods of employment on field service. Shortly after he assumed command, the Government of India ordered an expedition against the Zaimukhts, a Pathan tribe occupying a territory to the north and east of our line of communications between Thul and Kohat, on which they had committed innumerable outrages. Their stronghold, called Zawa, which they deemed impregnable, was a fastness consisting of a few villages in a depression in the mountains that was only approachable from the level country through a ravine some seven miles long. This ravine was commanded throughout its length by high hills, and it narrowed gradually till the heights on either side

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

almost met. at the upper end, forming an entrance into the depression only wide enough for two or three men abreast. Zawa was the objective, and the force told off to attack it was made up of four mountain guns from one battery and two from another, two hundred and fifty sabres taken from three different Indian cavalry regiments, a company of sappers, one British infantry regiment, a detachment from another, and detachments from four Indian infantry battalions. Total, six guns, two hundred and fifty sabres and about two thousand six hundred bayonets. The force was certainly variegated enough ; but this could not be helped, for—as is customary on lines of communications—the Kurram Force was distributed about among a number of small posts, none of which it was considered safe to vacate even for a short time. But the most extraordinary thing about this operation was that, while General Tytler was in military command, his own superior in the army and the officer commanding the force in the Kurram, General Watson, accompanied him as Political Officer. General Tytler carried out the job most skilfully. He reached Zawa with the loss of only one British officer and two men, he punished the offending tribe, and when he returned to his starting-point the Zaimukhts made no attempt to follow.

The troops in the Kurram had little to do for the rest of the winter. I spent much time going about among the Turis, making the acquaintance of their head-men, and picking up what information was possible about the tribe, their neighbours and the surrounding country. It was possible also to do some shooting and some paper-chasing on horseback. I moreover ascended Sikaram, the highest mountain in the Safed Koh range and shot some chamois on its slopes. The mountain is over fifteen thousand feet high, and there is a small lake on the summit which is frozen over ; some snow pheasants were secured on its bank.

The Pathans are a hardy race of good physique and they are determined fighters. The various clans are normally at enmity with one another, and they could never be induced to act together against us even in a religious war. The vendetta is their sole excitement, and its prosecution is the normal amusement of these hillmen. They are greatly under the influence of their priests, but are even more influenced by song—this before now

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : Second Phase

has set the whole frontier in a blaze. But to understand the race it is necessary to understand their language and to study their literature and their folk-lore. They are great travellers and will journey long distances to procure arms and ammunition. Their language, Pushtu, is quite independent of the other languages which are spoken in and around India.

All the time that we were sitting idle in the Kurram, the troops, whose numbers were always far in excess of requirements, were simply eating their heads off when they might have been usefully employed (and were indeed urgently required) elsewhere. One must presume that they were kept where they were for the purpose of countering those imaginary bodies of hostile tribesmen whom our Politicals always had up their sleeves, and whom they supposed to be full of guile and ever on the point of attacking us. Most of the evil-disposed who were then in these parts were only hungry, poor souls, and their few crimes were caused by starvation.

There is nothing so sickening to soldiers as waiting in the field for an enemy who never comes. It dispirits and disgusts them, and we were all longing to get away from such an unprofitable situation. The new Amir, Abdul Rahman Khan, had been placed on the throne of Kabul in July by the Indian Government, so we all hoped that we would soon be withdrawn from the Kurram Valley, which, under the agreement come to with him, had been declared a protectorate under a ruler to be elected by the Turis. We all knew quite well that such an arrangement was quite impossible ; and so it proved, for the Government of India had subsequently to annex the valley and to place a British officer in control. But while this futile procedure was being discussed, the political pot was again upset, for on the 27th of July a British-Indian force of 2,476 men was completely defeated at Maiwand with a loss of 964 killed and 167 wounded—to say nothing of followers—by Ayub Khan, a nephew of Shere Ali's ; Ayub Khan claimed the Afghan throne and was resolved to gain it by force of arms. This disaster was only relieved by the gallantry of the Royal Artillery and 66th Foot, who were the only British troops engaged, the rest of the force being composed of troops of the Bombay Army, whose behaviour in the battle left much to be desired. This disaster was followed by the siege of Kandahar. On the

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

news of the reverses reaching India, measures were at once taken to defeat Ayub Khan and to retrieve the situation, but they were much delayed by the usual scarcity of transport. During this time there was no little anxiety for our garrison in Kilat-i-Ghilzai, a fort in the centre of the Ghilzai country, which consisted of one battalion of good soldiers of the 2nd Baluch Regiment, which regiment I subsequently commanded.

Our General at this juncture received a telegram from Army Headquarters asking what he could do. I had previously collected information respecting the little-known intervening country from Ali Khel to Gurdiz some forty miles off, and had ascertained that the route is passable for mules. After Gurdiz is passed, the route on to Kilat-i-Ghilzai is easy, passing through the fertile province of Zurmat, where the crops were then ripe so that there would be no difficulty regarding grain and forage. I drew up the proposed reply based on this knowledge for General Watson's approval, and recommended that we should take 700 picked men from each of the two British battalions, a British mountain battery, 400 picked men from each of our two cavalry regiments enlisted in the Punjab, and 650 from each infantry regiment enlisted in the Punjab, together with a company of sappers. This would give us a force of six guns of the most modern type, and some 5,000 men of the best that could be found anywhere.

The political situation was also most promising. The people of the country through which we would pass were all devoted to the Amir Abdul Rahman Khan, who was himself whole-heartedly on our side. It was, therefore, most unlikely that our march would be opposed, and in any case we would be strong enough to take care of ourselves. I calculated that we could reach Kilat-i-Ghilzai in from ten to twelve days, and that, under the circumstances, we should arrive there before the force which was to march from Kabul did. Once we got there, the safety of that isolated garrison would be secured, and our force could then either march for Kandahar, reinforced by the Kilat-i-Ghilzai garrison, or could wait to do so till it was reinforced by the troops advancing from Kabul under Sir Frederick Roberts, as circumstances might dictate. Transport was sufficient to carry the necessary ammunition and food. But when I took my plan to the General he said, after giving it due consideration,

The Afghan War of 1878-80 : Second Phase

that he did not think it was feasible, and he told me to reply that we could do nothing. I was naturally greatly disappointed, but of course he was the best judge. In war nothing is certain. One has to be guided by probabilities, and the probabilities were, in my opinion, almost entirely in favour of the project. However, it was not to be, and our large force in the Kurram cul-de-sac remained inactive.

During the rest of the war nothing occurred except for a few small local affairs ; but in the meantime I collected much useful topographical and military information for the Intelligence Department of Army Headquarters, for which I received the thanks of the then Commander-in-Chief, General Sir Frederick Haines, G.C.B., afterwards field-marshal. After the defeat of Ayub Khan and the relief of Kandahar, the second Afghan War was brought to a close, and the accession to power of a Liberal Government in England resulted in the wise abandonment of the advanced positions within Afghan territory which had been acquired in the previous year under the terms of the treaty with Yakub Khan. In November, 1880, the Kurram Field Force was broken up, and I returned to my regiment.

The army that had been assembled in the field at the time of the Afghan War was merely a fortuitous collection of units, which had been thrown together in haste to form brigades and divisions and which had undergone no previous combined training. The staffs were picked up anywhere, and neither they nor the units with which they found themselves associated had any previous knowledge of one another. Many of the guns sent into the field were obsolete. The Medical and Transport services were unorganized, and they were, moreover, inadequate both in respect to personnel and to material. The Intelligence system was beneath contempt, being mainly in the hands of Political Officers who possessed no military qualifications and who knew little or nothing about the country in which the operations were taking place. At this period, and for many years subsequently indeed, Government control of military matters was signalized by imbecility and by false economy. To start with, the army in India all this time was under dual control, and it remained so until Lord Kitchener abolished that system. There was, furthermore, mischievous intervention on the part of the Governor-General in regard to actual military

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

operations during the Afghan War. The desire to save money was paralysing the efficiency of the fighting forces, and the unwarranted parsimony that had been exercised in previous years added vastly to the difficulties and to the expense of the campaigns of 1878-9 and 1879-80.

CHAPTER XIV

BACK IN RAJPUTANA

I rejoin my regiment at Ajmir and am appointed second-in-command.—Become Commandant.—The question of forming a reserve for the Indian Army.—A proposal with regard to the Mers agreed to by Army Headquarters, but it is pigeon-holed in the Military Department.—This subsequently made applicable to the regular native infantry throughout India, for which it was unsuitable.—The reserve as then formed.—Improving the musketry of the regiment.—Successful results.—We build a temple in recognition of the regiment's participation in the Afghan War.—The selection of a god to whom to dedicate it.—The image brought from Mandata.—Visit of the Duke of Connaught.—I proceed to Alwar to raise Imperial Service Troops in that State.—Difficulties likely to arise in such a situation.—Arrange with the Foreign Office to be regarded as a servant of the State.—Consultation with the Maharaja.—We agree as to procedure.—The reorganization of the force.—Everybody satisfied.—My life at Alwar.—Difficulties with the Political Agent.—Lord Roberts inspects the troops.—I resign, much to the regret of the Maharaja.—Our friendship.—An appreciation of him.—Offered the command of the 2nd Baluch Battalion, and my acceptance.—Good effect amongst the warlike classes in India of the Duke of Connaught's being given an Indian command.—The subordination of the military to the civilians.—Mischievous results of this in the past.—The chief civilian official in Ajmir objects to my putting the Duke of Connaught up, on these grounds.—How this principle injured the native officers and men.—Bad treatment of these by petty civilian officials.—The warlike races imagined that the Duke's arrival would better their position.—Farewell to the Merwaras.

FOR services as Assistant-Quarter-Master-General of the Kurram Force during the second phase of the war I had been twice mentioned in dispatches, and I had also been strongly recommended to the Government of India for the brevet of lieutenant-colonel, but did not get this latter promotion. Having been especially mentioned to Army Headquarters for my survey and intelligence work during the campaign I had hoped to be appointed to the Quarter-Master-General's Department at Simla. But a technical objection unfortunately prevented this; owing to my being on the cadre of the Bombay Staff Corps, the Government of India decided that I was ineligible, as such appointments were only open to the Bengal Staff Corps. I therefore rejoined the Merwara Battalion at Ajmir on the breaking-up of the Kurram Force.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

The strength of British officers with the regiment was at this time increased by one, viz., by a second-in-command, and to this position I succeeded. It should be mentioned that in those days it was customary throughout the Indian Army for the native officers to hold somewhat more responsible positions than is now the case; in local corps they commanded the companies. The reason for this was that at that time the number of British officers allowed to a corps was considerably less than is the number allowed now. There were then only seven British officers to a regular Indian infantry battalion, whereas nowadays the number varies between nine and fourteen. I served as second-in-command of the Merwaras till April, 1884, and on the commandant then being transferred to another corps I took his place.

Two unsatisfactory features in connection with the Indian Army had become very apparent during the Afghan War. One was that no reserve existed for this army, the other was that the musketry was of very low standard. I therefore resolved to draw the attention of Army Headquarters to the first-mentioned shortcoming, and to remedy the second myself in so far as my own regiment was concerned. I drew up a report on the subject of a reserve, pointing out how easily and cheaply it could be arranged for, and asked to be allowed to put the suggestions into force, as the Mers were particularly suited to make the experiment on. They had practically formed a reserve themselves while the regiment was in the field, and some small alterations in what already existed would make it an effective one. The suggestions were based on the idea that the reserve thus sanctioned would be purely tentative and economical, the latter consideration governing the whole proposal; for the Government of India assuredly would not sanction the expenditure of the money required for a really efficient reserve. The one proposed would, however, be a beginning. In India it is expedient to proceed with caution in the initiation of anything, no matter how useful.

Both Army Headquarters and the local Government approved the proposal. The Quarter-Master-General, Major-General Sir Charles Macgregor, who then dealt with such matters, wrote a very complimentary letter, saying that the recent war had amply proved the necessity of an Indian Army reserve, and that

Back in Rajputana

the modest proposal which I had made—supported as it was by the Commander-in-Chief—could not be refused by the Government, for whose sanction it had been sent through the Military Department. It, however, remained pigeon-holed in the Military Department for some four or five years, and only at the expiry of that period was it resuscitated. It was, moreover, then made applicable to the regular infantry throughout India, for whom it was quite unsuited; it had only been a tentative plan, that was to be tried in one province under special conditions. It remained in force until the outbreak of the present war, when it produced some 35,000 men, who were mostly old and physically unfit for field service, and even so this small reserve was numerically insufficient to make good war-wastage for more than a month or two. The money spent on this reserve during the previous thirty years had been pure waste carried out in the name of economy. The pay, two shillings and eightpence a month, was insufficient, while everyone with any knowledge of India knows that the willingness of men to join such a force varies in the different parts of the country, so that anything like rigid uniformity is unsuitable. I subsequently, as Commander-in-Chief, made many attempts to put this miserable reserve on a satisfactory footing, but never could get the necessary funds.

It has always been my custom in dealing with Indians to take those concerned into my confidence when desirous of making any change. I told the regiment my opinion regarding musketry and that it behoved them to improve their shooting; all ranks gave their best support and, individually, made their most strenuous efforts to meet requirements. We were soon completely successful and within a year we were one of the best shooting regiments in the Indian Army. I introduced rifle competitions amongst the local corps in Rajputana, for which nearly all the Rajputana and Central India Chiefs gave prizes, and a regimental team was got together which competed at all the great rifle meetings—the Bisleys of India—at which the team met with great success and won many important events. The regiment, moreover, became the second or third best shooting regiment in India.

After my obtaining the command, the priest who had been with us in Afghanistan, supported by the native officers of the regiment, represented that, in gratitude for our good fortune

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

during the campaign and in recognition of the regiment's services, it would only be right that we should erect a suitable regimental temple. They declared that this idea had been in their minds ever since the regiment had returned from the front, but that they had deferred making the proposal until I should be Commanding Sahib, as they were not sure how such a project would be received. This seemed an excellent idea, and it was decided that we should set about carrying it into effect without delay. A grant of land which included a well was obtained from Government, and, directly the news got about that we contemplated setting a temple up, presents came pouring in from the Mers. Some sent stone, others provided lime, others again furnished brass. Everything in the shape of material that was required for our purpose was in fact obtained by these means, while the men of the regiment provided the necessary labour. Within a very short space of time the temple had been built by willing hands, and a garden had been laid out around it, together with a residence close at hand for the priest. A platform was, moreover, erected all round the temple on which we could sit of an evening and discuss matters of interest to the regiment.

Then there arose the question as to which of the numerous gods included in the Hindu pantheon was to be chosen as the one to whom the temple ought to be dedicated, and so as to decide this important point, the priest, the native officers and I held a meeting one evening in committee. The priest, who was asked to speak first, said that in his opinion it was necessary that for the type of worshippers who would frequent the temple, and owing to the fact that it was to be a military temple where visitors of every class and of different religious persuasions were to be expected, the proper god for the building to be dedicated to was one to whom all would pay reverence. "That god," said he, "is Mahades, the great god, and they who know these things are aware that he, the universal father, has an abode in everything that liveth. The temple should be dedicated to Mahades, the great god!" This recommendation on the part of the priest was accepted. To the educated Hindu the various gods are merely symbols of the psychic forces of nature, while to the unlettered peasants the gods take the place of saints and spirits, such as are venerated in other religions; but the unity of the various gods underlies the religious conceptions alike of the

Back in Rajputana

educated and of the uneducated Hindu. The ikon or image of the god to whom the temple is especially dedicated is always placed therein, and for our regimental building the image had to be obtained from Mandata on the Narbada river, to which reference has already been made in Chapter VI. The day on which it arrived was a gala-day in our little cantonment. All Merwaras, and a good many of the inhabitants of Ajmir who belonged to other forms of religion, were present at the ceremony, and this was carried out with proper solemnity and *éclat*. The regimental priest was formally installed in the temple, where he is still to-day fulfilling the position.

H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, who was then Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, came to inspect the regiment shortly afterwards. He was accompanied by H.R.H. the Duchess. He visited the temple and he spoke a few kind and appropriate words to the priest, and his action in the matter delighted the Mer community.

I remained at Ajmir in command of the Merwara Battalion until the year 1886, and was then invited to take up a position in one of the native States, Alwar, and there to raise a regiment of cavalry and a regiment of infantry which the Maharaja, my old friend Mangal Singh, had offered to the Government of India to be maintained as Imperial Service Troops. But although he was a great personal friend, and although he wrote to ask me to accept the appointment as a special favour to himself, I had doubts as to whether to go to Alwar or not. From the frequent visits that I had paid to Indian Chiefs I was acquainted with the inner workings of their territories and was well aware of the difficulties likely to be met with when serving in one. There are almost always three parties in a native state. There is one party which is loyal to the Chief, there is another party which looks to the Political Agent alone, and there is a third party which intrigues between the Chief and the Political Agent. So long as the Chief and the Political Agent are on friendly terms, as is usually the case if the Political Agent is a strong man and the Chief is a sensible one, all goes smoothly. But when this is not so there results all manner of confusion and trouble, and in these everybody, British or Indian, within the State becomes involved.

It therefore seemed the wisest course not to accept the job

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

unless I were acknowledged to be a servant of the Alwar State. Acting in that capacity I should be holding a definite position independent of the Political Department of the Government of India, and should be able to deal with my friend the Maharaja direct. So situated one would be able to work at one's job as one liked (of course with the Maharaja's concurrence in whatever was done) regardless of outside influences. I therefore proceeded to Simla, where I saw the Foreign Secretary who agreed to my terms, and then set off for Alwar.

The first thing to be done on arrival was to pay a formal call on His Highness and to learn from him what were his general ideas as to what ought to be done. He said that he wanted these troops of his to be thoroughly well organized and equipped, and he promised that he would supply whatever money was required. He, moreover, expressed the wish that I should work with him direct. This latter proposal did not appear to be expedient and I told the Maharaja that, while fully appreciating his kindness, I could not recommend the adoption of such a procedure. His Highness had a State Council, and if I did not carry on official business through this, its members naturally would feel that they were being ignored and would in consequence take up an attitude of opposition to the movement as a whole. It seemed most desirable that we should all work harmoniously together and that the creation of this new military force should be popular—the more so seeing that this was the first native State in which Imperial Service Troops were being organized. The troops, moreover, would have to be supplied with a great deal of equipment, all of which would have to be bought somewhere, and I did not wish to be concerned either in the ordering of it or in the paying for it, as somebody would be sure to say that I was making a profit out of the transaction. The right course would be for the Council to order and to pay for everything, on my requisition and with his sanction.

He readily concurred, and I informed him of the arrangement which had been arrived at with the Foreign Department and on the strength of which I had accepted the position, viz., that I was to be a servant of the State during my time in Alwar. I suggested to His Highness that he should give me such rank amongst his nobles and officials as he considered necessary. He expressed himself as well satisfied and declared that he would



MAHARAJA SIWAI MANGAL SINGH OF ALWAR.

[To face p. 172]

Back in Rajputana

at once make it known that I was Commander of his troops and that as such I would rank in the State immediately after himself.

All this having been satisfactorily settled, it was possible to proceed to business. The troops were minutely inspected to start with, and it at once became apparent that they were a good deal alarmed at my arrival and were under the impression that it boded them no good ; all the officers were therefore got hold of, and after learning my views their anxiety disappeared. Their confidence was secured by assuring them that, whatever was done, their individual interests would be well looked after, and that neither their pay nor their privileges would be adversely affected. On their finding that this was so they gave me their whole-hearted assistance.

The State troops, who numbered some four thousand of all ranks, proved to be a most remarkable collection. Some of the men were so old that they could hardly walk. Of every form of military knowledge, other than forming fours, presenting arms and going through a few very simple performances, they were wholly ignorant. Most of them, moreover, were foreigners to the State. So all of them who were unfit for military duty were pensioned off, while most of the foreigners were discharged with a suitable gratuity. They were, all of them, well content with this procedure, for the pensions and the gratuity alike were on a scale to satisfy them. Of the balance remaining over, some, who although not fit for military duty were nevertheless capable of other work, were transferred to a police battalion, but drawing the same pay and allowances as they had been receiving in the old State army. The surplus of efficient men were absorbed into the new cavalry regiment and the new infantry regiment which I was to raise and to train. An increase of pay was sanctioned for these latter, and pension regulations suitable to a native State were drawn up, so that all were pleased with the arrangements arrived at, and that an actual saving of money on the State forces as a whole was brought about.

Owing to there being no assistance for me from anyone whom I had not trained myself, the work was very arduous. But the State officials, both civil and military, gave me willing and hearty support ; I indeed enjoyed the support of everybody, from His Highness the Maharaja down to the simple soldier. The work was, moreover, most interesting and it furthermore

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

served as an education, because, living as I did altogether among natives, I got to know all about a Rajput State. The evenings were generally spent either with the Maharaja and his visitors from other States, or else they came to see me, and I came to be on terms of friendship with all the State officials, many of whom were cultured gentlemen of high character. The few holidays that I was able to take were generally spent tiger shooting with the Maharaja, and real good sport we had. But there were, nevertheless, many matters in connection with the State that were unsatisfactory—and the attitude of the Political Agent was one of them.

He was of opinion that the fact of a British officer being a State servant in Alwar, and not subject to himself in consequence, was injurious to his dignity. He was one of those sort of people to whom dignity is the salt of life and who imagine that it comes from outside, whereas it in reality is innate; and the result of this was that he was a mass of "corns," on one of which somebody was always unintentionally treading. It seemed clear that if I were to remain in the State long I was sure to have differences of opinion with him, as it was of course impossible to avoid intercourse with him; and as any disagreement of this kind between us would be most inadvisable I resolved to get finished with my job as fast as possible and then to clear out. At the end of six months the troops were satisfactorily organized and were becoming quite efficient, and it therefore seemed to be time for me to give up my appointment. Lord Roberts was at this time Commander-in-Chief in India and I asked him if he would come and inspect the force, and the Maharaja wrote to him to the same effect. He consented to do so, and after a most minute and searching inspection, and after seeing the troops in the field, he was most complimentary with regard to the standard of efficiency which they had attained and as to the short time which had been necessary to achieve this result; he sent in a report to the same effect to the Government of India. Then, having completed my task, I sent in my resignation and rejoined my regiment at Ajmir.

The Maharaja was much distressed at my departure, and declared that when I had gone he would have no friend. He, of course had plenty of sycophantic friends, as men in his position always have; but he had gauged them correctly, and he

Back in Rajputana

declared that I was the only person to whom he could open his heart and speak freely and who would give him a candid opinion of any subject that arose. He reminded me that we had changed puggarees* and that we were therefore brothers, and he made me promise to visit him at Alwar again whenever it was possible. But this I was only able to manage once, when he was very ill, and he died soon after that, a victim to his circumstances.

He was a real good sort, honest, true, and as brave a man as ever lived. When out big-game shooting one can judge of a man's courage. He was a splendid horseman and a good shot. I cherish his memory affectionately and believe that, could I have remained with him or had he possessed any real friend at his side, he would have lived longer, and that many difficulties which subsequently occurred in his State would have been avoided. Thus finished a very valuable Indian experience with regrets—as is not unusual in India, that land of regrets.

Some eighteen months later I was promoted substantive major on completion of twenty years' service, although, thanks to the brevet that had been awarded for the Afghan War, I was already a pretty senior officer to be holding that rank in the army. That being the case, it seemed advisable to obtain a transfer to some other corps, much as I regretted leaving the Mers and quitting Rajputana after having spent so many years in that part of India. For in a local corps one was virtually in a cul-de-sac, no higher appointment than that of battalion-commandant being open to one. Just at this juncture, early in 1890, His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, as Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army, offered me the command of the 29th Bombay Infantry (the 2nd Baluch Battalion), then stationed at Loralai in Baluchistan, on the understanding that I was in the first instance to join it for a period of six months as second-in-command, previous to the command falling vacant. This was a very sound condition, for the men composing the regiment were of different race and religion from those with whom I had so long been associated, and they, moreover, spoke a different language. The Baluch battalions were, in the main, recruited from Pathans, and although it had been possible to learn some-

* Changing puggarees is an Indian way of accepting brotherhood, and a brotherhood so formed is looked upon as equally close relationship to actual blood-brotherhood.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

thing of this race and to pick up some Pushtu during the two years that had been spent in their country during the Afghan War, it was obviously desirable that I should, before taking over command, personally know the personnel of the regiment. I gratefully accepted His Royal Highness's offer, which was the more gratifying in that the 2nd Baluchis were "The Duke of Connaught's."

It may be mentioned here that the appointment of the Duke of Connaught to a high military command in India had the best possible effect amongst the warlike classes, as much owing to the marked popularity which he speedily acquired with those representatives of such classes as he came into contact with, as owing to the fact of a son of the Queen-Empress taking up a prominent official position in the country. His Royal Highness, in the first instance, was in charge of the Meerut Division, and while holding that appointment he necessarily became known to the warlike classes of the Punjab, who may be called the sword of India. From Meerut he was transferred to the Bombay Army to become its Commander-in-Chief. The area that then came under his jurisdiction included Baluchistan, within which there were many soldiers drawn from the Punjab races, and the Bombay Army also included many representatives of the Maharathas and other martial races of Central and of Southern India. To understand how important an influence the presence of a Royal Prince occupying a high military command in the country exerted at the time, it is necessary to understand the relations that not many years before had existed between the leading soldiers in India and the leading civilians, and that still existed to a great extent.

The administration of the country in the days of the East India Company had been such, from the earliest period of the Company exercising territorial sovereignty, as to keep military commanders constantly in subjection to civil officials—this even in respect to the conduct of operations in the field. The result of such a system had been that the forces of the Company had met with many grievous discomfitures. Several Governor-Generals, notably Lords Wellesley and Ellenborough, had attempted to remedy this evil; but the influence of the civil service had always proved too powerful to permit of their succeeding. The most glaring example of a disaster brought about by

Back in Rajputana

this procedure is provided by the Afghan War of 1842, "a war conceived by the Government of India in injustice, undertaken in ignorance, and executed in incapacity." During that campaign General Nott had full military and political control (of course under the Government of India) in the Kandahar theatre of operations where he was in military command, and his force therefore acquitted itself well. The force at Kabul, on the other hand, was under the control of civilian officials, whose orders the general merely carried out, and it met with terrible misfortunes as we all know. When the avenging army advanced, General Pollock was in entire control and his army was completely successful. The custom of allowing armies in the field to be virtually commanded by civilians continued up to the time of the first phase of the Afghan War of 1878-80, and civil interference in peace time—only slightly reduced as a result of Lord Kitchener's reforms—went on up to the day when I quitted India in March, 1914.

The system of civil command oppressed everybody in the army from the Commander-in-Chief down to the last-joined Indian recruit, and it must be understood that even in matters social the civilians claimed superiority, and that the Government invariably supported their contention. An illustration of the feeling that existed on the point is provided by the following incident: On one occasion when the Duke of Connaught was coming to inspect my Merwara Battalion at Ajmir he decided to honour me by staying at my house for a couple of days. On hearing of this the chief civil officer at Ajmir took umbrage. He came to see me and said that it was his *right*—as chief civil officer—to put His Royal Highness up, and he declared that I had usurped that right. He requested me so to inform the Duke, and to say that, unless His Royal Highness stayed with the chief civil officer during the visit, an insult would be put upon that chief civil officer in the eyes of the natives, and his dignity would be lowered. I, of course, replied that I was not prepared to do anything so impertinent, and that if he took exception to anything that His Royal Highness did it was for him to make the representations himself. So the matter ended. But the incident shows the state of feeling that then prevailed amongst Indian civil officials with regard to their position *vis-à-vis* to military officers.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

The civil control pressed particularly hardly upon the native soldiers, over whom the petty civil officials always endeavoured to lord it, taking their cue from their superiors. Most of the native ranks in the army belong to the lesser yeoman class, and either own farms or else possess shares in farms, and in the old days they had been given the right of precedence in having their land-cases heard in the law courts. This was an immense boon, owing to the frequency of law-suits of this kind, to the intricacy and the delays in legal procedure, and to the venality of the lower courts. Men frequently enlisted for the express purpose of securing this right of precedence, and they thus became the legal representatives of their families and became—besides being soldiers—the most important members of their village community, among whom they were treated with the utmost respect in consequence.

The existence of the privilege was well understood by all other natives, and it had the sanction of established usage and of age. But the civil authorities, mainly actuated by that passion for uniformity which runs mad in India, have whittled it down to such an extent that practically nothing of it now remains, and that so much of it as does still remain can only be brought into play on the production of certificates from commanding officers. Certificates run mad in India like the passion for uniformity. It was the case, moreover, that, notwithstanding repeated orders issued by the Government of India and special injunctions from the Governor-General himself, the petty civil officials were wont to mete out most insulting treatment to Indian officers and to Indian soldiers, a treatment which was bitterly resented in the army. Many years afterwards, when Commander-in-Chief, I repeatedly brought the evil consequences that would arise from this behaviour to the notice of the Government of India, but with no other result than the issue of a fresh circular which had no more effect than its predecessors. Thousands of times Indian officers and soldiers have said to me: "Nowadays the lowest rascal in the land puffs his filthy tobacco smoke in our faces." For a low-caste man to do this to one of high caste is a gross insult.

When the Duke of Connaught joined the army in India the soldiers and the people belonging to the warlike castes bucked up exceedingly. They concluded that their civil privileges would

Back in Rajputana

be restored and that their *izzat* would receive proper consideration—as I am sure would have been the case had His Royal Highness been able to effect it. But the unwarlike races took a somewhat different view of his appointment. They had been so accustomed of recent years to see soldiers put into a back seat that in their view the dignity of a Royal Prince would have been better upheld had he been given the post of Commissioner of some civil division. Prominent Indian bankers and lawyers have often expressed this opinion to me.

After a most affecting parting with the Merwara Battalion I started for Loralai. Many of the head-men of the Mers, moreover, came into Ajmir to see me off, and as I had many friends in the city and in the surrounding country numbers of these also came to bid me good-bye, some of them having travelled long distances to do so. Although there had been some breaks, such as that caused by the Afghan War, it was eighteen years since I had first come to serve in Rajputana.

CHAPTER XV

IN COMMAND OF THE 2ND BALUCHIS

Journey to Loralai.—The Baluchi regiments of the Bombay Army.—Organization of the 2nd Baluchis.—Loralai as a station.—The Kakar Pathans.—Exploring expedition of 1889 into the Zhob Valley.—Languages spoken in the regiment.—Character of the Pathans.—Their improvidence.—Their vanity.—Their excellence as soldiers.—The inhabitants of Baluchistan and their languages.—The Durand Line.—The objections to annexing the border districts up to this line.—How such annexation would affect the Indian soldier.—The strategical objections to holding Quetta.—The importance of treating the Indian Army well.—Reorganization of the 2nd Baluchis.—How the company of Marri Baluchis was raised.—How close relations were maintained with the rank-and-file.—Characteristics of the Baluchi.—Part-ownership in horse-flesh.—The Baluchis regard it as very selfish that all the looting of the Hindus should be kept by the British for themselves.—The 2nd Baluchis take part in the Zhob Valley Expedition of 1890.—Its difficulties.—The ascent of the Takht-i-Suliman.—A mention in dispatches.—Leave home and marriage.—Rejoin regiment at Hyderabad.—We proceed back to Loralai.—Appointed A.A.G. at Poona.—A tonga adventure on the way down.—Pir Peshingi, the regimental priest.—An unwonted incident at an inspection.—Efficiency of the regiment.—Importance of commanding officers and British officers in general, who belong to the Indian Army, studying the psychology of their men.—Fine record of the 2nd Baluchis during the Great War.—This largely due to its good moral tone.—All Indian regiments should be allowed regimental priests.—The saint whom the Afridis found to be a better investment dead than when alive.

I PROCEEDED by rail to Harnai, a station on the more northerly of the two lines connecting Sibi with Pishin. This place was fifty-seven miles from Loralai; the intervening country was mountainous and not safe at that time for a traveller to pass through unless guarded. There was, however, an escort waiting for me at the station under command of an Adam Khel Afridi named Madat Khan, with whom I soon made friends. He said that there was plenty of game along the road, and it was therefore arranged that we should make the journey by easy stages, always starting at daybreak so as to get in early and to allow some hours afterwards for shooting. As there were lots of wild sheep about each halting place, as well as a few wild goats and some partridges of sorts, we enjoyed excellent sport during our march up.

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

There were at this time three Baluchi regiments in the Bombay Army, numbered respectively the 27th, 29th and 30th Bombay Infantry, the 27th being also known as the 1st Baluch Battalion, the 29th (my corps) as the 2nd Duke of Connaught's Own Baluch Battalion,* and the 30th as the 3rd Baluch Battalion. They were generally spoken of as the "1st," "2nd" and "3rd Baluchis." These three regiments in peace time served only in Baluchistan or in Sind, out of consideration for the distance from their homes which the men would find themselves were the regiments to be pushed further into India. Baluchi sepoys received an allowance of two shillings a month in addition to ordinary pay when serving in Baluchistan. All native troops, moreover, when serving in the Quetta District, in which Loralai was included, received a special allowance of four shillings and eightpence a month, and compensation in addition in lieu of their rations. The 2nd Baluchis at this time were organized as six companies of Pathans and two companies of Punjabi Musalmans, with a few Sikhs; there was not a genuine Baluchi in the regiment, although it had been mainly composed of them when it had been raised some sixty years before—which accounts for its name.

Loralai is not a popular station either with British or with Indians, although the Pathans like being there because it is in their own country. Indian soldiers in general dislike being quartered in this remote spot in Baluchistan, owing to its necessarily being a long and expensive journey for them to make when they visit their homes on furlough, and also because living there is costly, for the additional allowances received do not compensate for the high prices. It is especially unpopular with native cavalry soldiers, owing to grass being scarce and to horses having in consequence to be fed on chopped straw, which is expensive and which does not suit horses well; owing to the very stony character of the ground around the station the horses, moreover, are frequently lamed. At this time there was a native cavalry regiment, the 18th Bengal Cavalry, and a native

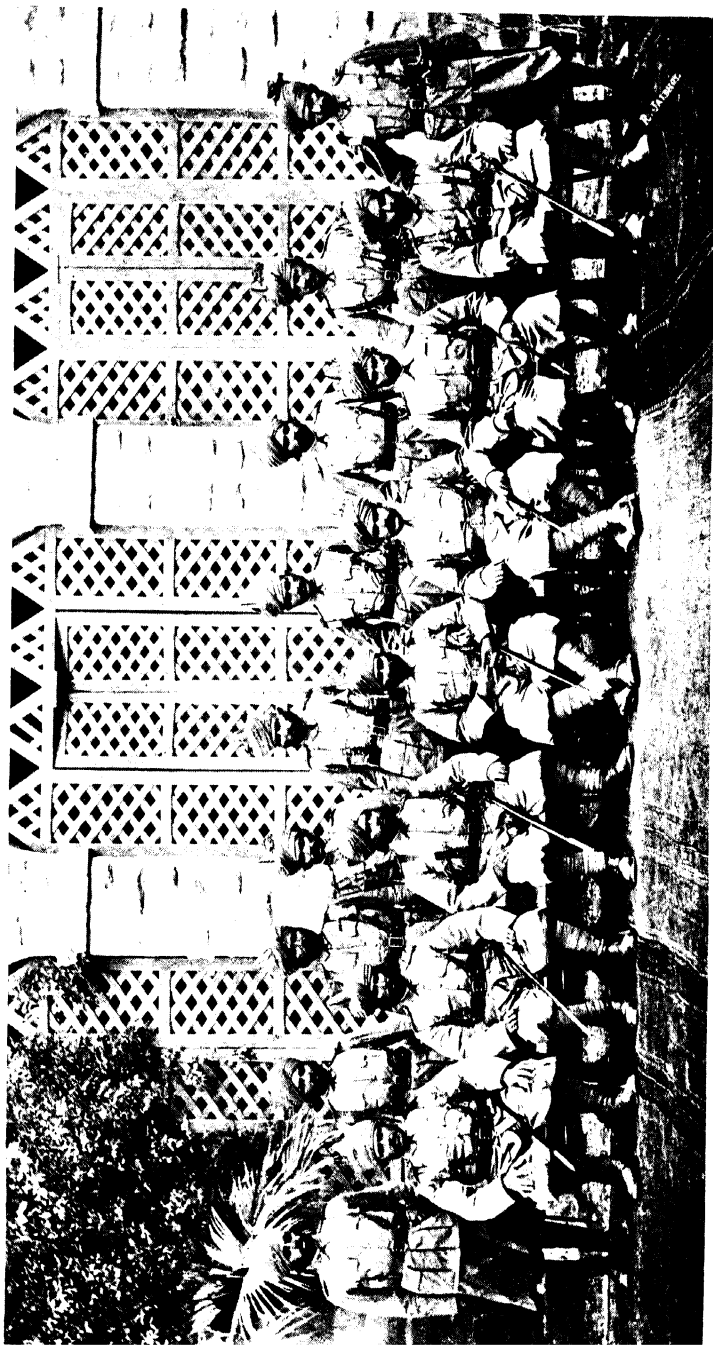
* The 2nd Baluchis had a distinguished record of service. They had taken part in the Persian War. During the Afghan War they were the corps that was shut up in Kilat-i-Ghilzai, referred to in Chapter XIII., and they had been especially chosen to form part of the Indian Contingent which went to Egypt in 1882 and which fought at Tel-el-Kebir. They are now known as the 4th Duke of Connaught's Own Battalion of the 10th Baluch Regiment.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

mountain battery stationed in the place as well as the 2nd Baluchis.

The climate is temperate in summer, but it is very cold in winter, and at that season of the year snow often lies on the ground for two or three days at a time. The surrounding country becomes very pretty in the spring, when wild flowers abound. The fields are irrigated by means of underground channels which convey the water from springs in the neighbouring hills; and vines and apricot trees are cultivated in the villages. The inhabitants of the district are Kakar Pathans, a somewhat unruly clan who will not enlist in the regular army, although they readily joined a special levy corps of their own which kept the peace among themselves. Previous to the Afghan War the Kakar Pathans had been nominally subject to Afghanistan; in those days there had been constant strife amongst the clansmen, and much disorder and bloodshed had prevailed. The situation had, however, rapidly improved since British rule had been established. In 1889 the Zhob River valley lying to the north of Loralai had been traversed by an exploring expedition under Sir Robert Sandeman, much topographical information had been gained, and the chiefs of various clans dwelling in that region had been interviewed; one or two minor clans had on this occasion shown themselves recalcitrant, and it was this that led to the Zhob Valley Expedition of 1890, which was carried out some six months after my assuming command of the 2nd Baluchis.

The languages spoken in the regiment by the native ranks were Pushtu and Punjabi, while the British and native officers had a common means of communication in Urdu (Hindustani), which some few of the men also understood. Under such conditions there necessarily was a great deal of translating to be got through while transactions were being carried on in the orderly-room, and my knowledge of Pushtu, acquired during the Afghan War, little as it was, stood me in good stead both with the majority of the rank-and-file, and also with the inhabitants of the district, in which I did a good deal of shooting. I studied the language hard, and in a short time had become quite proficient in it and passed the Government test according to the "higher standard." The remainder of the British officers followed suit. It is, needless to say, quite out of the question to



NATIVE OFFICERS OF THE 2ND BALUCHIS.

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

command men effectively unless you know their language, and it was of great advantage to the regiment that its British officers soon became conversant with the Pushtu which the majority of the men spoke.

The Pathans are, like my own countrymen, impulsive, easily excited, and, as a rule, of most cheery disposition; but they also have a strain of sadness which is sometimes in the ascendant, although it seldom lasts long. Under certain conditions and when subject to certain emotions this sadness becomes moroseness and leads to desperate crimes, especially so when either the sense of honour or the sense of shame comes in question. It is significant that honour and shame are expressed by the same word in Pushtu. Like my countrymen, the Pathan has a strict sense of honour of his own, and in both races the sense of honour differs markedly from that found amongst the English. It is very necessary that British officers who are serving with Pathans should be familiar with this code of honour and should treat them in accordance with it; if this method is followed the rank-and-file will be found easy to get on with, a most cheery, friendly and responsive soldiery. As was mentioned in Chapter XIII., the vendetta is rife amongst Pathan clansmen, and there is scarcely one of them living in the trans-frontier territory who attains the age of discretion without having killed his man. They always say that their troubles are caused by *zamin* (land), *zan* (women), and *zar* (gold), which, after all, is also found to be the case elsewhere.

Although reckless, generous and improvident, they have a great love of money, and to get this they will do anything provided that it is not contrary to their code of honour. Yet, when they have got the money they lavish it and never hoard their gold. Generosity and hospitality are, in their eyes, the greatest of virtues, and no greater insult can be put upon a Pathan than to accuse him of a lack of either. To call him stingy or a miser is to hurt him in his tenderest feelings. Every Pathan is a bit of a "blood" and thinks no end of his personal appearance. He is a great dandy and he loves to dress up in his best clothes and to swagger about in some big bazaar, through the alleys of which he struts, considering himself the cynosure of all eyes—as he indeed usually is in the eyes of the Hindus, whom he treats as altogether inferior beings. Before starting

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

on one of these swaggering excursions he will spend hours on his toilet, an occupation in which the looking-glass plays an important part. He is, moreover, a great man with the ladies, who especially appreciate a Pathan who has served or is serving in the army, the more so should he be able to display war medals, or should he be a buccaneer of some sort. The Pathan loves story-telling and is naturally a fine raconteur.

All this helps to make him a good soldier, and when on the warpath he is ever full of *élan* and ready to take his place in the forefront of the battle, although he is at the same time cunning and gives his enemy no advantage over him in wiles and tricks. He has a natural aptitude for use of ground and is a good shot ; but except in the higher ranks the Pathans enlisted in the army are illiterate, although, like most illiterates, they have surprisingly good memories. All who know the Pathan soldier well love him for his gallant bearing, his independent and yet pleasing manners, and his candid speech. To British officers whom he knows and respects he is faithful and true, but without a trace of the flattering or cringing attitude that is so common amongst the unwarlike races of India. Those who do not understand his psychology find him difficult to manage, and they therefore dub him fanatical, treacherous and cantankerous.

The Pathans tolerate a few Hindus in their country (although despising them as idolators and as money-lenders) because they are useful for keeping accounts and for borrowing money from. But the Hindus are only allowed to occupy very inferior positions. They are called "Hindki," they have to wear the red trousers customary for Pathan women, and they are not allowed to build temples. But otherwise they are not ill-treated, most of them have been resident in the Pathan country from ancient times, and they all speak Pushtu.

The inhabitants of Baluchistan are Musalmans of the Sunni rite, and of Semitic descent like the majority of Pathans ; but they are not nearly so bigoted or so much under the influence of their priests as are the more northerly race. Like the Pathans, they are very fond of music and of story, and they are great raconteurs ; I have spent many pleasant hours at the camp-fire of an evening listening to their recitations. The Baluchis are aristocratic in their form of tribal government, being ruled by

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

chiefs and not by committees of elders like most hill Pathans. The country immediately to the north of the Bolan Pass is the habitat of the Bugti and the Marri tribes ; further north again the people are Pathans even in what is called British Baluchistan. The Bugtis and Marris, as also some Baluch tribes dwelling nearer to the Indian plains, speak Baluchi, which is a patois of Persian. To the south of the Bolan Pass are the Brahui tribes who speak a language of their own. Therefore, in this border-land there are three languages spoken, viz., Pushtu, Baluchi and Brahui, as well as Punjabi and Sindhi in the country where the uplands merge into the plains of India.

Pathans and Baluchis alike are passionately attached to their independence, which under the existing system is secured to them. A treaty now exists with the Amir of Afghanistan by which that potentate agrees not to interfere with those tribes whose territory is outside of Afghanistan proper and lies between the Amir's borders and the British administrative frontier. The Afghan border-line in respect to these independent tribes was fixed in the year 1894 by a commission from Afghanistan, co-operating with one from India under Sir Mortimer Durand, and this frontier is generally known as the "Durand Line." But in 1890, at the date when I took up command of the 2nd Baluchis, the matter still remained in an unsettled state. Many proposals have been made to the Indian Government definitely to annex all the tribal country right up to the Durand Line ; but were such a course to be adopted it would inevitably result in much bloodshed, and in a great expenditure of money at the time and subsequently. For, as a consequence of such a forward policy, numbers of garrisons would have to be established and maintained in these hilly regions, where service of a permanent character would be most unpopular both to British and to native soldiers. In so far as Indian soldiers are concerned, I believe that obligatory service in this region would prove so unpopular that, were the territory annexed, recruiting for the Indian Army would become most difficult, if not impossible.

As has already been stated, the Indian soldier is usually a small landowner and married. It is therefore essential that he should visit his home periodically, and although he gets prolonged furlough at stated periods—usually once in three years—that manifestly is not sufficient ; he must manage visits much

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

oftener. His family is frequently engaged in law-suits, deaths, marriages and births take place, and on all such occasions his presence is required alike on religious and on social grounds. When he has to make a more or less lengthy journey from his station to railhead, and has then to make a lengthy journey by train from railhead to his home, a great strain is put upon his scanty financial resources. Except in the case of Ghurka regiments and of some special corps, only five per cent. of the sepoys are allowed to have their families with them, while many classes will not bring their families into the lines because their women are "purdah," or else because they cannot afford the expense. The consequence is that, the further the sepoy is stationed from his home, the more unpopular does military service become.

Burmah, Quetta and other trans-frontier stations are disliked for these reasons, as also is service in the Colonies. In the case of native troops serving in such places, extra allowances are, it is true, given; but these are insufficient to cover the extra expenses thrown upon the men when they are stationed so far from their homes. The objection of the sepoys to being quartered in such places was one of the reasons why the best military and civil opinion in India opposed the annexation of portions of Baluchistan. But military opinion was also opposed to that annexation on strategical grounds, and the objections put forward at the time that the step was proposed have been amply justified, I think, since. Even Quetta itself, planted down as it is on the further side of a desert which separates it from India, represents a strategically false position, and it will be worse when railways are developed in Persia in course of time. The construction of the railway from the Indus to Quetta and of the subsidiary lines which the occupation of this region has carried with it, coupled with the further extension of forts, garrisons and posts to the north of Quetta and in the Zhob Valley, have cost countless millions which India has had to find to the detriment of more useful objects. A heavy strain has moreover been put upon the army, which already in the opinion of most officers is too small for its duties.

It is all very well to speak of the loyalty of the frontier tribes and of India generally, and no doubt there is a good deal in it. Still, loyalty does depend on interests, and interests again depend upon what the natives call the *ickbal* (good fortune) of the British

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

Government. So long as this retains its *ickbal* there will be loyalty everywhere. But once it fails or is thought to have failed, enemies will become numerous, and then the sole sound defence on which the Government of India will be able to rely is the British Army. If to that army we can add the Indian Army and the people from whom it is recruited—as we certainly could do if we treated them reasonably in the meantime—the numbers of Asiatic enemies will matter little. But these facts are not always sufficiently realized. To retain the fidelity of the Indian Army, we must treat the agricultural classes and the gentry fairly, and above all we must see that the mercenary soldier is well paid, well housed and properly pensioned. The soldiers must have reasonable prospects of promotion and of leave, and they must not be kept absent from their homes for an undue length of time.

Soon after I joined the 2nd Baluchis I was ordered to enlist no more Sikhs in the regiment and to arrange the Pathans in it into companies according to their tribes. This was soon effected, and the regiment then consisted of two companies of Punjabi Musalmans, five companies of Pathans, and one company of Marri Baluchis whom I got special permission to enlist. It thus came to be an all-Musalman corps. Getting the Baluchis proved difficult just at first, because army service is not popular with these people owing to many of the regulations being to them vexatious. They, for instance, wear their hair long, down to their waists, and as this dirtied their tunics it could not be permitted. They also considered that there was too much trouble about leave. But these difficulties were got over.

I first of all went for a shooting trip in the Marri country, made friends with some of the leading people, and a young man was selected and asked to join the regiment for a month to see how he liked it. To this he agreed, and during that month he was quite happy. I then gave him leave on the condition that he returned with four or five of his clansmen, which he did, and so the process was carried on till there was a complete company. It was a splendid one; the men were fine soldiers, most docile and willing, and the most truthful men I have ever come across. If they committed a fault—and those which they committed were trifling—they always owned up at once. Nothing punished them more severely than to be told that their hair

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

ought to be tied up ; when I inspected them I used to stroke this admiringly and to remark that it was beautiful, which pleased them greatly, so that we got on capitally. They are quite illiterate and despise education ; only their mullahs can read or write.

My door was always open to them, as it was to all men of the regiment, who were allowed to come and see me whenever they wished. But on these visits they might only talk on private or personal matters ; if they wished to speak about promotion or regimental affairs they had to come to the orderly room in the usual way. They appreciated the necessity of this rule and they never broke it. But being able to see their commanding officer in this unceremonious way kept them all happy, and I got to know them and their people, which made things pleasant all round. There never was the least difficulty in getting recruits, of any number wanted and of any class. Learning the Baluchi language did not prove difficult and I soon passed the higher standard examination, so that, knowing Pushtu, Punjabi and Urdu as well, I was at home in all the languages spoken in the regiment.

The Baluchi has the same characteristics as the Pathan, without the occasional moroseness of the latter. He is less fanatical, and, although proud of his personal appearance, displays less swagger. His ballads are remarkable, and one which was almost a paraphrase of *Chevy Chase* greatly interested me. Baluchis are fine horsemen and each of them owns a steed—or part of one if not rich enough to own the whole. The way they divide the animal in the latter case is that they share it by legs ; if a man owns one leg he has the use of the horse for three months in the year, if he owns two legs he has the horse for six months, and so on. Such a system of divided ownership speaks well for the honesty of these people and for their horsemastership. They are great raiders and will proceed long distances on horseback when so engaged ; now that they can no longer carry out raids into India they go as far as Persia.

They have queer ideas concerning our rule in India. One of them told me that he thought we were very selfish to keep the Hindus entirely to ourselves to loot, and he remarked that we ought, anyhow, to give the Baluchis compensation for their share of the loot of which we were depriving them. I replied

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

that we did not loot the Hindus, but that we ruled them well and fairly, that we made no money out of them beyond what was required to pay for the cost of Government, and that we certainly could not afford to compensate his people for what they had lost by not now being allowed to carry on the robberies which they had practised in former times, when India was in an anarchical condition and when the Baluch and other freebooters rode through the land. He smiled and said : " Sahib, it's all very well not giving us any compensation. You can act as you like about that, for you are strong enough to give orders which we must obey. But you don't expect me to believe that anybody would possess millions of fat Hindus and would not loot them. I know you are joking." No doubt he felt quite sure that I was lying to him.

After acting for a time as second-in-command of the 2nd Baluchis, I succeeded to the command early in 1890, and in September of that year the expeditionary force to deal with two recalcitrant clans in the Zhob Valley was set in motion under Major-General (afterwards Field-Marshal) Sir George White, with Sir R. Sandeman as chief Political Officer, the 2nd Baluchis forming part of it. The main body of the force started from Quetta, and were joined in the upper part of the Zhob Valley by the 18th Bengal Cavalry and the 2nd Baluchis marching in direct from Loralai. It proved to be almost a bloodless campaign, although some sniping took place at picquets and a few marauders were killed. The operations, however, entailed exertions of quite exceptional kind upon officers and men owing to the extreme ruggedness of the mountain country which they had to traverse. The character of this at times prevented the use of transport animals, and the men had then to carry their bedding and cooking pots as well as their kits, and they had to sleep in the open at night with from thirteen to twenty degrees of frost. The marching was, moreover, always over rocks and stones, and often along river beds where the water was icy cold.

The most troublesome one of the two clans had trusted to the inaccessibility of its villages in the heart of the mountains ; but this fastness of theirs was successfully surrounded in spite of the extraordinary difficulty of the country and the approaches, and the clansmen thereupon surrendered. This took place on the 6th of November. A week later Sir G. White, accompanied

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

by fifty men of the K.O.Y.L.I. and fifty men of the 2nd Baluchis under me, ascended the Takht-i-Suliman, the culminating point of the Suliman range, which rises to over eleven thousand feet above the sea level and overlooks the Indus plain towards Dera Ismail Khan. "The ascent of the Takht-i-Suliman," wrote the general, "was far the most difficult operation in a physical point of view I have ever called upon soldiers to perform, and the fact that the British soldiers and the Baluchi sepoys, fully accoutred, scaled these dangerous heights will not be lost upon the Sheranis." (The tribe peopling this region, of which the two recalcitrant clans were sub-divisions.) A durbar was held on the 18th of November, certain fines were imposed, and the troops then returned to their stations. I was mentioned in dispatches; but as there had been practically no fighting the frontier medal was not awarded to the troops who had taken part in the operations. A few days later the 2nd Baluchis marched down from Loralai to Hyderabad, Sind, and shortly afterwards I took eighteen months' leave to England.

While at home on leave I was, in April, 1891, married to Miss Elizabeth Reade, whom I had met in India, and a few weeks after this I sustained a severe loss in the death of my mother. The winter of 1891-2 was spent at Biarritz, where my daughter joined us; my son was born in May, 1892, and that summer was spent in England. Then, in September, we sailed for India and proceeded to Hyderabad, in Sind. I had just been promoted Lieutenant-Colonel, having completed twenty-six years' service, and found myself in command of the station.

My family spent the hot weather of 1893 at Simla and that of 1894 at Kasauli; on each occasion I spent a short time with them in the hills. Then, in the winter of 1894-5, the regiment marched from Hyderabad to Loralai, while my wife and the children followed by rail to Harnai and thence by road to the new station. As it turned out, however, the stay at Loralai was to be but a short one, for early in 1895 I was offered the appointment of Assistant Adjutant-General of the Poona Division, which I accepted. As it happened, Major-General W. Galbraith, who was commanding at Quetta, carried out his inspection of the troops at Loralai just when I was about to proceed to my new station, and it was arranged that my family should remain at Quetta and afterwards go up to the

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

hill station of Ziarat close by to await the monsoon, before undertaking the journey to Poona across the torrid desert of Sind. General Galbraith and his staff rode back to Harnai, taking three days over the journey, while we followed in a tonga lent by the artillery, doing the journey in two days.

We met with an adventure on the second day, for the tonga upset close to a precipice, we were thrown out, and the contents of the tiffin basket were scattered over the road ; but no one fortunately was injured. It took time to find a few natives to assist in righting the tonga, and, owing to the delay that arose, we only just arrived in time to catch the train to Quetta, while I later took the train down country to Sibi and Sukkar.

I had found that my gallant soldiers were not attending properly to their religious duties and had therefore engaged a priest to look after them. He was a very holy mullah, who by descent belonged to the Karaish tribe—that of which the apostle of Islam had been a member. The mullah's family had long been resident in the Pishin Valley and he had himself in his youth, before becoming a priest, fought under General Ballard as a bashi-bazouk during the Russo-Turkish War of 1854-5 ; he always spoke most affectionately of his old commander. His name was Pir Peshingi, the title " Pir " corresponding to that of bishop. He exerted the best of influence in the regiment, by the men of which he was greatly venerated. He died shortly after I gave up command and is buried on the banks of the Phileli river in Sind. May he rest in peace, for he was a good man whose memory I respect. He used often to come and breakfast with me, and on these occasions he always insisted upon giving his blessing to my wife and my son. This he used to do in the fashion of a Musalman saint, giving the blessing and then blowing a breath on their heads, an operation which neither of them liked but which they had to put up with. Once, later on, I introduced him to Sir C. Nairne, who was then commanding the Bombay Army, when inspecting my regiment. Sir Charles happened to mention that General Ballard had been a great friend of his, whereupon the Pir fell on his neck and embraced him. I did not know what was going to happen, but the general was much amused at the incident.

The regiment had always met with high commendation from the generals under whom it was serving or by whom it was

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

inspected during my tenure of command. During the Zhob Valley Expedition it had done almost all the advance-guard work, and had been especially useful in the very difficult mountain country round the slopes of the Takht-i-Suliman. On one occasion when a slope was especially steep my men had carried the kits of the Yorkshire Light Infantry, with whom the regiment was brigaded; this shows the good feeling that always exists between British and native corps, which is especially noticeable when the latter are recruited in northern India. Shortly after I left the regiment all the Marri Baluchis took their discharges, which may have been because they experienced different treatment or because, being naturally horsemen, they did not like serving as foot-soldiers. I do not know the reason, but one thing I do know, and that is that the best of these countrymen of the north will not serve unless their commanding officer understands them and treats them according to what they believe to be their due. That is the only way of keeping a regiment of them happy and free from crime. It is the same, indeed, in all Indian corps, and it is necessary that their British officers should be carefully selected. Promotion by seniority or by favouritism will not do. Nor must the officers selected be tied up in red tape and rules and regulations; they must be given a free hand and if they then turn out failures they must be turned out without hesitation.

The Indian Army is composed of men of different classes, races and religions. What will do for one will not do for another. British officers must understand the psychology of the men under their orders, otherwise crime will be rampant and discontent will prevail. Occasions have occurred of trouble and even of mutiny breaking out among the sepoys, and of this being put down to seditious influences although it has in reality been brought about by the British officers not understanding their men. Still, such incidents are of course exceptional, for as a general rule the relations between the British officer and the native soldier are of the very best.

The 2nd Baluchis—of whom I am now full colonel—had a good reputation before I joined them, and this did not diminish during my tenure of command. That reputation has since been enhanced, and the regiment has gained glory on the plains of Flanders and in other theatres of the Great War. While it

In Command of the 2nd Baluchis

was in Flanders one of its sepoys, a Pathan, was the first Indian soldier to get the Victoria Cross, which His Most Gracious Majesty the King-Emperor opened to the Indian Army while I was its Commander-in-Chief. Many of the sick or wounded men of the regiment used to come to see me when sent to England. When congratulated on the glory they had won, they put it down to the good moral tone which I, assisted by the good Pir Peshingi, had maintained, and they said that I was the only commanding officer who had been in the habit of reminding them of their religious duties and had insisted on their attending to these. It had, they added, become a tradition in the regiment. They all lamented that no priest had accompanied them into the field, for, said they, "Soldiers without religion are no better than dogs, they have neither honour nor loyalty. Why does not Government recognize this and make all commanding sahibs do as you did?" I could not answer. The question has often puzzled me. I tried, as Commander-in-Chief, to induce the Government to allow a priest, with proper pay and status, to be attached to each Indian regiment. Something was done, but not much—no status, insufficient pay, and priests only allowed to a limited number of regiments. That was all that was sanctioned, and even the priests who were sanctioned were not taken on service.

Men from my old regiment and other Musalman soldiers told me how much they would have preferred when in London to have been taken to the mosque at Woking, rather than to have been carted round to see sights which they did not appreciate and which included statues, the existence of which offended their religious sentiments. Graven images of any kind are an abomination to the orthodox Sunni Musalman. In this connection it may be mentioned that the religion of the trans-frontier Musalman is a somewhat curious one, and to illustrate this a story that I once heard at Peshawar may be told.

There was a very holy man in that city who had originally come from the Afridi territory. Crowds used to flock to see him and to benefit by his religious instruction, and these people naturally brought a considerable trade with them. But the Afridi *jirgah* (council of elders) thought it a great pity that the financial advantages derived from this trade should be lost to their country, so they prevailed upon the holy man to return to the hills, and this he consented to do on certain conditions, such

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

as being provided with a dwelling, with food, and so on. Great financial benefit to the Afridis resulted ; but the more his disciples increased in number and the greater the profits arising from their presence became, the prouder grew the holy man. His demands for house accommodation, for victuals, for the building of a masjid, etc., finally came to be so excessive that the tribesmen began to find him a distinct burden. So the *jirgah* met to consider the position, and it came to the conclusion that the saint would be a more valuable asset dead than alive, because if he were dead his shrine would be visited by just as many of the devout as his dwelling was while he was alive, whereas the expenditure entailed by the upkeep of the shrine would be a trifle compared with what the saint cost living. They accordingly knocked him on the head, buried him, and erected a suitable tomb over the remains. Their anticipations have been amply fulfilled. The profit from pilgrims to the shrine is much greater than what used to be made out of the business when the holy man was alive, while the expenditure in connection with him is infinitely less. Sanctity in the border-land is, in fact, not without its dangers.

CHAPTER XVI

ON THE STAFF AT POONA

Poona.—The “Maharatha Brahmins.”—The Maharathas as soldiers.—A Maharatha muster-roll.—Appointed A.Q.M.G. of the Bombay Army.—The plague breaks out and gives rise to disturbances.—Asked to take charge of the plague operations at Poona.—Serious condition of affairs.—How the problem was being handled.—Discontent of the people.—Civil officials quite out of touch with native feeling and prejudices.—My method of gaining the confidence of the people.—The need for the steps that were being taken, explained to them.—My plan of campaign.—Caste committees set up.—The “plague volunteers.”—Sunday councils.—Popularity of the British soldiers working on plague duty.—The activities of Mr. Gokhale at this time.—A mischievous agitator who nevertheless got the ear of people in high places.—A statue to him, a Dekkani Brahmin, voted by the Legislative Council to be set up in the Musalman city of Delhi.—The plague suppressed at Poona.—Asked to take charge of plague operations in Bombay city, but General Nairne intervenes.—Appointed General Officer Commanding at Aden.—The congratulations of the natives of Poona.—Honour done to us who had suppressed the plague by the people.—A poem in English lauding our work.—The Government disapproves of these demonstrations.—Troubles caused in the Punjab by the plague and by the steps taken there to overcome it.

THE journey from Harnai to Poona was made via Karachi and Bombay. Besides being the capital of a district of the same name, Poona is an important military station, being the headquarters both of a division and also of the Bombay Army (now the Western Command). It is a city of over 200,000 inhabitants, a large number of whom are Dekkani Brahmins. These Brahmins are for the most part loyal ; but a small minority are viciously disloyal and these, to further their machinations, call themselves Maharatha Brahmins, although Brahmins and Maharathas are, in fact, of quite different caste, the latter being of low caste. The region around the city is almost entirely inhabited by Maharatha cultivators, but there are also a few Musalmans to be found. Poona was the capital of the great Maharatha Confederacy when it existed, and it was there that the Brahmin peishwas resided. These peishwas held hereditary office as prime ministers to the Maharatha kings, who were descended from Sivaji, the creator of the Maharatha Empire ; but they were for all

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

practical purposes the actual heads of the State, although they were not, in fact, Maharathas.

Maharathas have never as soldiers been the equals of men of races located further to the north. That they contrived to overcome these from time to time was thanks to superior numbers and to their engaging European adventurers to aid them in the field. Like most of the Indian races, the military value of different Maharatha clans, however, varies, the most martial amongst them being the Maolis who inhabit the comparatively temperate regions of the Western Ghats. In a native library in Poona I found a pay and muster-roll of the armies of the time of Baji Rao, the last of the peishwas, which gave one a good idea of the relative value which Maharatha chiefs at that time placed on the various classes of their soldiers. The artillery and the infantry, on whom the brunt of fighting would necessarily devolve, were composed respectively of Arabs and of men from parts of India to the north of the Maharatha country. The Arabs got twenty rupees a month and the others got twelve rupees a month. The cavalry was recruited from Maharathas; its duties were to pillage and to bring in intelligence, the pay of a trooper being only six rupees a month. The Maoli Maharathas were utilized for garrisons of home forts and personal escorts to the chiefs. It was due to the services of European adventurers like Boyne and Perrott, who organized the Maharatha armies on the western system, that these had succeeded in overthrowing the declining Mogul Empire. It should be mentioned that Baji Rao was sent by the British to live at Bithur, near Cawnpore, after his overthrow, and that the infamous Nana Sahib was his adopted son.

After spending about a year as Assistant-Adjutant-General of the Poona Division, I was appointed Assistant-Quarter-Master-General of the Bombay Army. My work while occupying that position necessitated travelling all over the Bombay Presidency, which added to my knowledge of its people. There are four different languages spoken in this region, viz., Maharathi, Guzerati, Hindi and Sindhi.

Shortly after my taking up the appointment, plague broke out in Bombay, and in due course it spread from thence to Poona and then affected large portions of India. The Bombay Government took prompt steps to suppress the fell disease; but these steps caused considerable ill-feeling locally, and this,

On the Staff at Poona

after a time, reached a climax with the assassination of two officers at Government House, near Poona, when they were leaving after a ball which had been given in celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Considering that some change in procedure must be introduced, Lord Sandhurst, then Governor of Bombay, now asked me if I would take charge of the plague operations in Poona, to which I agreed. But, as my general would not allow me to give up the work on his staff, the special plague duties had to be taken on as an addition to military duties. The staff work occupied one from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., so that there were only about three hours to spare, morning and evening, to devote to the plague, and I was kept pretty busy in those days.

On taking stock of the new job a dreadful state of affairs was found to exist. The officers civil and military who were engaged on plague duties had little or no knowledge of the manners and customs of the natives. The medical side of the work was being conducted on quite sound lines from the technical point of view ; but it was being carried on quite regardless of the castes and the religious customs of the people, and these strongly objected to some of the methods pursued—enforced, as they were, by *force majeure*. The inhabitants of a plague-infected house or neighbourhood were being compelled to vacate and to go into segregation camps ; their clothing and bedding were then disinfected, and much of this was, quite unnecessarily, being destroyed in the process. The arrangements within the segregation camps, moreover, while satisfactory enough from the English point of view, were an offence to the caste and to the religious prejudices of the people. All this was causing something like panic, and, as is ever the case in India when panic prevails, evil-disposed persons aggravated it for their own purposes. The position, in fact, was that, much as the people dreaded the plague, they dreaded the methods that were being adopted by the authorities a great deal more. They became sullen and morose, and so as to prevent outbreaks and to protect the British officials a large force of British soldiers had been drafted into the city.

One may well ask why the British officials on plague duty, who were trying at great risk to themselves to alleviate the sufferings of a people whose customs and prejudices they did not properly understand, took no steps to get into touch with

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

trustworthy natives who could have explained. But this is difficult to do. Without some knowledge of Indians' ways it is almost impossible to get into touch with the right natives, and I found that the officials on plague duty were quite ignorant, although many of them had served for a long time in this part of India. British civil officials located in and around Poona were, as a general rule, quite out of touch with the people, and the people in consequence traded on this aloofness. Many of the natives in Poona were of the mercantile and scribe caste; they neglected such caste and religious customs as were inconvenient, but they adhered to all the worst social customs of their caste. The ambition of such persons is to become politicians and "leaders of the people," and their practice is to demand "popular" reforms which nobody wants except themselves, by which means they secure high appointments and dignities. The rank-and-file of this gang are called by the natives in general "verandah men," because they hover around the British civil officials, call on these at their residences, and in practice never get beyond the verandah. The verandah men are on cringing terms with white men, who, if they happen to be ignorant, are easily taken in; I saw their hand very plainly in Poona. When I took on the direction of plague operations there the District Magistrate very kindly offered to place the "best" natives of the place at my disposal, but I politely refused his offer.

I have always found that the various Indian races understand the management of their own affairs uncommonly well. Difficulty only arises when they are called upon to graft British methods, which they know nothing about, on to their own customs. Here was a case in point. The natives did not understand the object of the steps that were being taken, so I determined to explain what was wanted to them, and then to let them work out their own salvation as far as possible under my general control and guidance.

The first thing to do obviously was to gain their confidence. This was done by withdrawing all the British soldiers, and proceeding alone to the market-place and sitting down there. My presence soon became known, and collected a crowd, to whom it was explained that the troops had been withdrawn and what my future intentions were. I was very well received, and remained a couple of hours talking to all, high and low, who

On the Staff at Poona

approached me. Before leaving, an appointment was made for the next day, when I proposed to put my intentions in detail before any natives who wished to hear them, and large numbers of all castes and creeds met me, and the medical officer who was my technical adviser, on the morrow. They were told that the only way to stop the plague was to continue operations on the broad lines already in force, viz., evacuation of infected houses and areas, complete disinfection of these, removal of infected persons to segregation camps, and quarantining people arriving from infected areas outside. (Inoculation as a preventive had not at this time been introduced.) They were told that there was no necessity whatever for the destruction of any of their belongings, but that, should such destruction accidentally occur, compensation would be paid to the owners. They were told that the British soldiers, who had hitherto been unselfishly working among them, did not understand their customs, but that this would be put right, and that, if we all worked together, we would stop the plague. They were told that we British would not enforce anything against the caste or religion of anybody, that we only wished to help them in their distress, and that if we could not do so with their good will we did not want to do it at all. I then said, "Hands up all those who want our help. If I see that they are in the majority, I and my officers will help to the best of our ability, for we greatly sympathize with your sufferings." Every hand went up.

I then unfolded my plan of campaign. The city was to be divided into convenient areas, each under a British officer who would have under him a few British soldiers to do disinfecting work, which their caste prejudices hindered natives from doing properly. To each such officer was to be attached a representative of each caste included in that particular community, who would inform the officer if any step proposed was of an offensive nature, when the matter would be referred to me. Under the representative of each caste were to be a number of his caste people whose duty it would be to report cases of plague to him, to induce the infected to vacate their dwellings, and to arrange for their suitable conveyance to segregation camps. To myself personally were to be attached representatives of the different castes, who would keep me informed of progress and would

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

advise me regarding matters in dispute. As the only way to get the best caste representatives was to allow each caste to elect its own, in accordance with its customs, they were told to do so. These proposals were unanimously approved, the various representatives were duly elected, and they took up their duties as to the manner born.

The segregation camps I took under my own direction and arranged for caste committees to superintend them. All the various caste representatives elected to aid in the plague work were called "plague volunteers," and they soon became proud of the designation. When it is remembered that natives are much more susceptible to plague infection than are Europeans, it will be realized how public-spirited these representatives were. Some of them were poor, low-caste people, others were well-to-do and of high caste; but all alike performed the duty that they had undertaken to perform bravely and well. There never afterwards was any friction, because we worked with the people direct through their approved representatives who had been chosen under a system which everybody understood.

Every Sunday the British officers and the plague volunteers met me in council, and we then offered one another advice, or issued instructions as circumstances demanded. I listened to all at these councils. The suggestions were many, for in the southern and unwarlike portions of India everybody is particularly fond of talking; but the suggestions were all patiently listened to, and the discussions were carried on in the most delightfully friendly manner. We used to call these meetings the "plague parliament" and they were most popular. It was remarkable, after the previous turmoil, that the most common cause of complaint was the removal of some British soldier belonging to the disinfecting parties from his area, as was occasionally necessary because the man was required for some regimental course, or for musketry. The people among whom he had been working invariably objected. "Why have you taken away our soldier?" they complained; "he is a good man and we want him to stay with us." This was most satisfactory, for it showed how kind and tactful British soldiers are, and how highly the natives appreciate those whom they know personally.

It is always so in India, once they become acquainted with

On the Staff at Poona

each other. Yet the late Mr. Gokhale when in England publicly accused the British soldiers in Poona of having ravished Indian women there during the plague operations, and the English friends of every country but their own believed him. He shortly afterwards came to Poona, of which city he was a native, and, in spite of his wishing to be nominated as a plague volunteer, even the people of his own caste would not recommend him. He induced a friend of his to ask me to appoint him as such, which the friend did most unwillingly. I complied, because he had publicly apologized for his atrocious libel with regard to the British soldiers. He was disliked and distrusted by most people in Poona and was especially disliked by persons of his own caste. I never trusted him, knowing his methods well, and never in after years changed my opinions concerning him, the correctness of which has since been amply confirmed. I often told him that it was impossible that an agitator like him could have the good of anyone except himself at heart, for had he any thought for the interests of the people of India he would have taken up the question of social reform before setting everyone at loggerheads. He was well aware that a community suffering from such social degradation was unfit for political freedom.

He never tried to humbug me. A clever man, he spoke English quite fluently and was an attractive, although sophistical, orator ; but he was a shallow thinker. A cunning schemer, he was skilful in appealing to the vanity of people whom he hoped to delude and who called him a great statesman, and he was looked upon as a high authority by the " Indian party " in the House of Commons—a body composed almost entirely of faddists who knew nothing whatever about India. While I, later on, was a member of the Government of India he was the bosom friend of some members of the Governor-General's Executive Council who did not belong to the Civil Service ; those who did belong to the Civil Service, on the other hand, estimated him correctly. He died a Commander of the Star of India and a Member of the Governor-General's Legislative Council. That body, on his death, with the approval of the Government of India, voted him a statue, to be put up in the Musalman city of Delhi ! That fact indicates how utterly unrepresentative of Indian opinion the Legislative Council is, for statues are an abomination to Musalmans, and one

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

that would be more obnoxious to the Musalmans of Delhi than the effigy of a Dekkani Brahmin could hardly be selected.

There were some few disloyal Brahmins in Poona, whose Press incited to crime. No doubt it was these people who, taking advantage of the stupid way in which the plague operations had at first been run, egged on certain fanatical, half-educated individuals to commit murder. There were also, naturally enough, a few discontented citizens of Poona who, however, were not disloyal; they were, indeed, quite honest in expressing their feelings to me; some of them were high-caste men of position. They complained that when they went to see a certain responsible official they were received with rudeness; but they all of them helped me willingly and I never had the slightest trouble or difference of opinion with them.

Within six months of my taking charge of the plague operations, and carrying these out with the willing co-operation of the people and without the slightest friction between them and their British friends—for so they regarded us—the plague at Poona was suppressed and my work was at an end. We had the great satisfaction of having won the friendship and the gratitude of the native community amongst whom we had been working, both high and low, and it will always be the same where British and Indians act in co-operation and where the former act as we did.

On the completion of my plague duties at Poona, I had completed thirty years' service and had been promoted full colonel, and the Governor of Bombay shortly afterwards asked me to take charge of plague operations in Bombay City. To this I reluctantly agreed, subject to Sir Charles Nairne giving his sanction. But this Sir Charles refused to give in my own interest. He considered, quite rightly, that were I to take up this duty it would adversely affect my military career, and I owe him a debt of gratitude for his action in the matter. I had only accepted Lord Sandhurst's offer because he had always been most kind to me and because this had made it difficult to refuse his offer.

Shortly after this I was appointed to the combined office of Political Resident and General Officer Commanding at Aden, was promoted Brigadier-General, and was instructed to take up the appointment without delay. When the natives of Poona

On the Staff at Poona

heard of this, thousands of them of all castes came to congratulate me and to express their regret at my departure. Some of the members of the city's municipality had fled owing to the plague, but many of them had remained at their posts and had given me every possible assistance, risking their lives fearlessly. They asked me, together with the military and medical officers who had worked under me, to a farewell ceremony in the city, at which they presented me with an address of thanks and they adorned us all with necklaces of flowers. It is a pretty Indian way of honouring friends or distinguished visitors, and it certainly seems preferable to the British practice of inundating one's "little Mary" with wine and eatables. Each separate caste, moreover, invited us to a similar entertainment, and they all especially requested that the British soldiers who had worked in their areas should attend—which these did; I thought it a graceful act on the part of the castes to include the soldiers who had laboured so faithfully and well in stemming the epidemic. Never before nor since have I seen such a spontaneous exhibition of gratitude on the part of the population of a city. Some of its inhabitants even broke out into poetry in our honour—and this in English. When natives do this it is always pathetic. You can look into the poet's mind, and what he sets down has a deep meaning, which the people to whom he reads it in their own language appreciate. I kept one of these effusions, and here it is for my readers to judge :

*" Like the moon in the sky
Among the clusters of stars
Shines Colonel Creagh
In the meetings of the wise.*
Fever heat he subdued,
Adopting measures mild ;
God pacifying His plague,
Made His Colonel to gain prize.*

*" Oh, God ! Ever keep happy
Colonel Creagh and Mr. Lamb,
Doctors Read, Jones and Street.*

* Our Sunday council.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

*By grateful means
They all sent plague away.
By Almighty favour
All people are happy now.*

*" Oh, our God ! To their welfare
We shall offer you sincere prayer.
Nobody else will take their care.
Forget not Colonel Creagh and Doctor Read.
Travellers segregated ;
Such were examined by Doctor.
Rules framed consent of people ;
Segregated returned on tenth day.**

*" Happy ever be our Queen !
When famines and plague among people
The generous Queen protected them
With enormous wealth.†*

*" Women affected with plague
Were carefully examined,‡
And taking them to hospital
Were relieved and pacified.
Spending much money,
Arrangements excellent
Secured the segregation camp.
Giving milk in early morning,
Children were all made happy.*

*" Our Queen day and night
Took every care of them ;
So kind is our mother
Showing anxiety about us,
For sufferings of patients
Are like miseries of fish
When taken out of water.*

* Ten days represented the time necessary to free from infection.

† Everything in the segregation camps was provided free by Government.

‡ This means that " purdah " was respected.

On the Staff at Poona

*A disciple of Lord Ram**

Supplicates a prayer.

Bend down ye all

To Almighty feet.

Let vast dominions

Live long and increase

Of our mighty Queen,

Ever to reign over us !

God bless the Gracious Queen Victoria, Empress of India !

God bless the Viceroy of India and Governor of Bombay !

God bless Colonel Creagh ! ”

The success of our efforts at Poona was presumably reported to the Government of India ; but all the notice that they took of it was to issue a decree that officers were in future to accept no such demonstrations from natives as we had received. As the demonstrations were quite spontaneous I do not see how they are to be avoided without insulting the people who desire to make them. Nor can I see how, when the demonstrations are made in honour of military officers (as we all were) who have no official connection with those making them and who at once quit the district, the demonstrations can do any harm. Displays of this particular kind are very different from those often got up by interested persons for political objects, such, for instance, as meetings got up in furtherance of the extension of the appointment of a Viceroy “loved of all India,” or of a Governor, or of some other highly-placed official—meetings to which no objection is officially taken.

The plague, unfortunately, was not wholly extinguished. It broke out again in Poona and in other parts of India, and it continues still, causing much loss of life, especially in the Punjab. But its virulence decreases at each visitation, and there are hopes that it will eventually die out. Evil-disposed persons in the Punjab spread tales amongst the villagers that the disease was not the plague, but that it was due to the poisoning of the wells by orders of the Government with the object of diminishing the population and so leaving more grain available for export to England. Incredible as it may appear, this story was believed by some, and riots occurred. These disturbances were attributed

* The Hindu god Ram Chundar.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

to sedition—which, indeed, was the object of the inventors of the stories—but they, in reality, were caused by fear. To suppress those disturbances explanation was needed and not force. But explanation was not sufficiently resorted to, nor were the spreaders of the lying tales punished.

CHAPTER XVII

IN COMMAND AT ADEN

My position at Aden.—The Protectorate.—The situation in Yemen.—Aden as a fortress.—The Arabs of the Protectorate.—Their interference with trade.—Treatment of the chiefs.—An interpreter on the make.—The swindling that went on at Aden.—How public money was wasted.—Somaliland under me for a time, but then taken over by the Foreign Office.—The latter starts badly.—Inconveniences arising from Somaliland being separated from Aden.—No Indian lawyers at Aden.—How the plague was suppressed.—A Swahili *émeute*.—It is settled by "judicious concession."—A Swahili sportsman.—The Somalis in Aden.—Their swimming feats.—Visits to Somaliland.—An Austrian scientific mission and how it was dealt with.—Soliman Inger checkmated.—The Government of India disapproves, and Lord Salisbury approves, of my action in the matter.—The truth about the scientific expedition.—The Sultan of Lahej.—How a distinguished guest is received by Arab chiefs.—Experience with a horse.—The Sultan's gramophone in my bedroom.—Slavery in Southern Arabia.—A port-loving Primate.—Ordered to China, first as Commander-in-Chief, then as Brigade Commander.

I WAS glad to get the Aden appointment, which was a much more responsible post than the command of an ordinary brigade in India. It meant a new country to become acquainted with, in which there was bound to be much to interest me. The place had a bad reputation for heat, but one had become pretty well inured to heat in Rajputana, in Sind, and in the Khaibar. Before starting I procured a good Arabic dictionary and a good Arabic grammar in Bombay, because, although the appointment went by the name of "Political Resident," its duties in reality were those of a local Governor who was in charge at once of the civil and of the military administration in a part of the world where Arabic was the language principally spoken by the population. In respect to civil administration I was responsible to the Governor of Bombay, in respect to military administration to the General at the head of the Bombay Command.

The Aden Protectorate included the whole southern coast of Arabia, from a little west of Sheikh Said, by the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, up to near the borders of Oman. The actual Aden Hinterland was then the southern portion of the Turkish

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

province of Yemen, the people of which were in almost constant revolt against the Ottoman authorities, as they had been ever since the Turks had finally conquered them and annexed their territory to the Sultan's dominions in 1872. Previous to that date the Zaidis, with their capital at Sana, had dominated this region, although it had been temporarily occupied by the Turks in 1844. The Osmanli forces that had gained the upper hand in 1872 had been under the command of General Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, who afterwards so greatly distinguished himself in the Armenian campaigns in 1877-8 against the Russians, and who for his services on that occasion was granted the title of *Ghazi* (meaning "Warrior against Infidels"). Mukhtar Pasha was subsequently Ottoman Agent in Egypt.

Before their overthrow by the Turks, the Zaidis had been ruled by an *imam*, who was a descendant of the Prophet of Islam. During the time that I was at Aden this family was living in a state of semi-independence in a village not far from Sana, which city the Turks had made their capital of the Yemen province. The Zaidis had often, during their frequent uprisings against Ottoman rule, been very near to attaining their object; but they had always failed in the end, owing mainly to the possession of serviceable artillery by their antagonists. One of the periodic rebellions was in progress while I was in charge at Aden, and the Zaidi *imam* sent me some of his confidential officials to sound me as to his chance of getting British support. It had to be made clear to him through his emissaries that he must expect nothing of the sort, and that the British Government would on no account mix itself up with the internal affairs of Yemen. It seemed a pity; for it was obvious that Turkish domination in Arabia could not last long, and that it would not be in the interests of the British Empire that some other foreign Power, possibly Germany, should gain a foothold in the region east of the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb. The Germans had already turned their eyes in this direction, and it boded us no good. It should be mentioned that the British Protectorate in Southern Arabia included the little-known province of Hadramaut, as well as the islands of Perim and Socotra.

The town of Aden is the capital of the Protectorate. It is built on an extinct volcano, which forms a peninsula that is separated from the mainland by a narrow isthmus; this isthmus

In Command at Aden

offers the only land approach to the place, passing through what is called the Barrier Gate. In my time, Aden was fortified sufficiently to withstand attack from the sea by a certain class of ship ; but the defences on the land side were out of date, although they could have resisted any force which was unsupplied with modern artillery. The fortifications as a whole were in a somewhat dilapidated state, but some improvement was effected in this respect during my term of command.

The Protectorate is inhabited by a number of different Arab tribes, under their own chiefs. These tribesmen were so quarrelsome, were so treacherous, and were being dealt with so weakly by the British Government, that the roads through their several territories were most insecure. This, coupled with the very arbitrary tolls that the tribesmen were in the habit of levying on merchandise in transit, affected trade most adversely. Money was being paid to these people for protecting trade, and this was entirely thrown away. The Arabs in this part of the country are a cowardly, thieving set, and they could easily have been brought to reason, so that no excuse in reality existed for permitting them to continue their evil practices. The Yemen is a fruitful country which produces coffee in abundance ; but, under the conditions that were permitted to hold good in the Protectorate, the traders preferred to take their goods to the sea through Ottoman territory in preference to risking them on transit through ours, and most of the commerce in connection with this productive region found its outlet at the Turkish port of Hodeida in the Red Sea and not at Aden. That this should have been the case amounted to a grave reflection on our administration, which, it is to be hoped, will cease under the altered political conditions in Arabia that have resulted from the World War.

Aden absorbs a considerable sum annually on its upkeep, half of which comes out of the pocket of the British tax-payer. It should, under proper government, easily pay its way. With a view of developing its trade I recommended the construction of a railway through our hinterland, and this was again recommended at a later date ; there would have been no difficulty in raising the sum required for its construction in Aden itself, but the project was rejected by the Secretary of State for India. Moreover, although Aden is supposed to be a free port, it is not so in reality. Fees are levied on all merchandise coming in by

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

sea by certain monopolists, who exact illegitimate charges under the name of landing and wharfage dues. They hamper trade and enrich themselves by the money thus extorted, which if it is extorted at all ought to go to Government. Even as it was, the trade of the place was worth some £6,000,000 or so, annually. That it ought to be worth a great deal more I pointed out to the Government of Bombay, explaining the methods of the monopolists; and as far back as 1900 a Committee was appointed by the Government of India to inquire into my statements. I heard that the Committee agreed that the statements were in accordance with the facts, but nothing was done.

In addition to the subsidies which our Government was in the habit of paying to the tribesmen, certain special arrangements were in force for entertaining the Arab chiefs and their friends when they were not suffering under official displeasure. Well-behaved chiefs were allowed to send certain of their sheikhs and of their relatives into Aden with letters of introduction, and the visitors were then entitled to official hospitality according to their rank. Well-behaved chiefs also enjoyed the privilege of being entertained when they visited the Resident. A pretty large establishment had to be maintained to deal with this matter and a good deal of public money was spent on it. It was under the control of the official native interpreter who was attached to the Residency, an evil-looking rascal of mixed Arab and Persian origin. He enjoyed great power and authority, and he had been exercising them for years under practically no control. I soon found that he had been engaged for years in levying blackmail from the chiefs and in cheating the Government.

One of his means of feathering his nest was by maintaining a wardrobe of garments suitable for natives of all ranks and stations. He used to dress up Aden coolies in some of this clothing and to introduce them to the Resident as sheikhs, relatives of Arab chiefs, and so on, giving them a small sum for acting the part, and then submitting a fictitious bill for having entertained them in lavish style. By this simple process he secured funds, he formed satisfactory matrimonial alliances with petty chiefs, and he contrived to exercise the great power which he possessed for his own benefit and well-being. As soon as I was able to bring his iniquities home to him I got rid of

In Command at Aden

him and deported those of his family who were incriminated to Somaliland—to the unqualified satisfaction of all the respectable chiefs and of the population in general. I heard subsequently that the gang had been allowed to return to Aden.

The fact is that, notwithstanding the voluminous rules and the elaborate checks laid down under the Indian Finance Regulations (which were strictly adhered to), the swindling that went on in Aden was appalling. This was gradually brought to a stop, and those who were guilty and against whom delinquencies could be proved were punished. As an example of what had been going on, it may be mentioned that in those days the garrison, as well as the inhabitants other than the poorest classes, drank distilled water. Distilling plant was being used by Government which supplied the troops, and distilling plant was also being used by merchants who sold the water to the civil population. It was discovered that, when the merchants found that their plant was giving out, they were in the habit of contriving that Government plant should be condemned, although still quite serviceable; they then bought the Government plant that had been condemned for next to nothing, and they sold their own worn-out plant to Government at a nice profit.

Many other matters in connection with Aden were in an unsatisfactory state. Although annual grants were made for the repair of the fortifications these were in some parts simply in ruins, and they had been so for years. There, again, was no Ordnance machine-establishment at the place, so that if anything went wrong with a big gun it had to be sent at great expense to Bombay to be repaired, and it was then usually out of action for a year. I give these few instances to illustrate the conditions as existing when I arrived. It is to be hoped that no other coaling station is in so unsatisfactory a state.

Somaliland was under my charge when first I took up the Aden appointment, but it was shortly afterwards separated from the Aden command and was taken over by the Foreign Office. Some years later it was transferred from the charge of the Foreign Office to that of the Colonial Office. As a matter of fact Aden and Somaliland are in reality interdependent, and they ought to be under the one control, preferably under control of the Colonial Office; the methods of the Government of

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

India are such as to render it quite unsuitable for having an Imperial coaling station under its charge. As it happened, the Foreign Office made a very bad start when it took over Somaliland, for it instituted an export-tax upon the meat which used to be sent across to Aden; the export had been free up to that time. The Somalis were much disgusted at this imposition, and it was due in some measure to their disgust that the "Mad" Mullah was so successful in stirring up the whole country against British domination. The blunder has cost us millions.

Since the control of Somaliland has been separated from the control of Aden and its Hinterland, all the rascals from Aden have been taking refuge in, and have been operating from, Somaliland, while all the rascals from Somaliland have been taking refuge in, and have been operating from, Aden. The distance between the two is short; but to arrange for extradition in either case is a long and difficult business. Both regions ought to be under one officer, acting as Governor, for which there are many excellent reasons quite apart from that of bad characters finding sanctuary owing to the regions being under distinct government.

Aden possesses one great merit—there are no Indian lawyers. In compliance with a request from the members of its Bar, the Bombay High Court consulted me on the subject of allowing some of them to practise there. My reply was that the language used in the courts at Aden was Arabic, and that no barrister who was unfamiliar with that tongue could possibly be permitted to practise in them. This put an effectual stopper on the proposal.

The plague broke out during my term as Political Resident, and for its suppression measures similar to those which had proved so successful at Poona were adopted. The people of all classes, Europeans, Musulmans and Jews, gave me their most willing assistance, and the epidemic was speedily stamped out. Only one incident worth recording attended our operations. A lot of Swahilis from the African coast live in Aden, and work there as stevedores; they were a most unruly lot, difficult to keep under control, and they objected to all the plague rules and offered every possible obstruction to their enforcement. One evening a party of them entered the principal bazaar, beat the Arab plague volunteer who was in charge severely, smashed

In Command at Aden

up some shops, and commenced looting. It was necessary to deal with this sort of thing very summarily.

I accordingly ran down to the bazaar in which they were carrying on their depredations, accompanied by some British soldiers, and we soon rounded the rioters up. I thereupon told them off individually, and then and there ordered the ring-leaders to be given thirty strokes each with a cane. After this well-merited punishment had been inflicted upon about a dozen of them on the spot, the next one to undergo it refused to receive it properly, saying: "You cannot flog me; I am a Sultan." I had him laid down by the soldiers and given forty. When he had had them I asked: "Now, who is the Sultan?" "You are," replied he, and after that there was no more trouble.

Now, there was a standing order to the effect that, if anything unusual occurred, it was to be reported to the Government of Bombay by telegraph. The incident seemed to be too trifling to be worth such a procedure. The Bombay Government would, moreover, have reported the affair to the Government of India, and that body, not being able to appreciate the necessity for the infliction of summary punishment, would have "declined responsibility," and would have worried me. But as it happened the Government of India did hear somehow that a disturbance of the nature of a plague riot had taken place, and they wired to me asking my reasons for not reporting the affair and directing me to do so at once, giving full particulars. This was rather a stumper, because "boons" and "judicious concessions" were all the go at the time in India—as they have been ever since, greatly to the detriment of sound government and the maintenance of good order. It would have been a little difficult to explain the case satisfactorily by telegraph, so I wired in the following words, which elicited no retort: "Affair too trifling to be worth reporting. Settled by judicious concession." One felt a little nervous lest they should inquire what the judicious concession was, as it would have been necessary to reply: "Thirty strokes with a cane." My career might have been ruined in consequence, but the Government of India on this occasion was less inquisitive than usual.

The Swahili "Sultan" bore me no malice. He knew perfectly well that he had deserved all that he got, and he and I

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

subsequently became quite good friends. He was induced to become a plague volunteer, and he kept his Swahili friends in very good order. I made him my agent in dealing with his people for the rest of the time that I spent at Aden, and on leaving gave him, at his request, a letter relating the incident of the bazaar and of what followed, of which he was intensely proud. Swahilis do not resent punishment if it be just and if it be inflicted summarily. What they do resent is injustice and anything of the nature of nagging. Indecision they put down to fear. Had my "Sultan" imagined that the punishment which he received was unmerited—and these people are very reasonable when properly dealt with—he would have sought revenge.

The Somalis in Aden are very troublesome and live mostly by theft. I used to carry out a drive periodically, to catch as many of them as I could, to hire a native boat, to put the captives on board, and to send them home to Somaliland. But this plan was not always successful, for they can swim like fishes, and when the boat had got out to sea to a couple of miles beyond the point to which it was accompanied by a police launch, many of them would jump overboard and would swim back to Aden. They were quite regardless of the sharks which abound in these waters and which devoured or maimed numbers of them. Many were also similarly disposed of when diving for coins thrown overboard by passengers on liners in the harbour, so shipping agents were notified that this practice was to be stopped, and that those disobeying would be punished. Somalis are cheery, amusing wretches, and one could not help liking them in spite of their thievish propensities.

The Somali Protectorate was quite peaceful while under the control of Aden, and I frequently visited the country and met the head-men of the various tribes, although not knowing their language was a disadvantage in dealing with them. They love making long-winded speeches and being entertained. I used to listen patiently to their orations, which were translated by the interpreter, and they were then informed that great importance was attached to what they had said, but that a reply could not be given till the next visit. After that they were given sheep to entertain themselves and their friends. By the time of my next visit they had forgotten all that had passed at the

In Command at Aden

previous one, this process was repeated over and over again, and everybody was happy. What they especially feared was that their country would be made over to the Italians; they did not fear the Abyssinians, who, they said, never could stand the hot Somali climate. The rumours that we were going to hand them over to some other nation had much to say to the success of the Mad Mullah after the Foreign Office assumed charge.

Shortly after this man's rise to power a small steamer arrived at Aden from Trieste with a German on board, who came to see me and told me that the vessel had been chartered by a scientific Austrian society to proceed to Somaliland with a view to searching after neolithic remains. The papers which he produced, purporting to be signed by the British Consul at Trieste, looked suspicious, and he was told that there must be confirmation by the British or the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office. He objected to my suggestion that he should send a telegram through me to one or the other, said that I was throwing doubt on the good intentions of a scientific expedition from a friendly country, and promised that he would call again. He did not return for two or three days, and in the meantime it was ascertained that one, Soliman Inger, was on board the ship. This Soliman Inger was a dangerous character, who had been expelled from Egyptian territory, and his presence determined me that the vessel must not be allowed to enter any harbour on the Somali coast. So the German professor when he turned up again was informed that the station man-of-war had orders to follow his ship and if necessary to use force in preventing any landing in Somaliland. He tried bluff, but eventually departed with the vessel and proceeded to the French settlement of Jibouti, and I took steps to have the Somaliland frontier with Jibouti watched lest any of the party should enter that way.

I reported my action by cable both to the Government of India and to the Foreign Office in London. The former, without waiting for the detailed account that had been promised in my wire, wrote to say that I had assumed a responsibility which they could not share and which would probably cause friction with a friendly nation. This was the more extraordinary seeing that the Imperial Academy of Sciences in Vienna had already

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

thanked me, through the Government of India, for assistance rendered to a scientific expedition into Southern Arabia and Socotra, an expedition which had been sanctioned by the Government of India and which had brought papers with it that were quite in order. But I sat tight, and in due course I received a reply from the Foreign Office which ran: "Your action approved. Thanks. Salisbury." A retort on the Government of India was too tempting to miss, although they would be sure to pay me out on the first opportunity—which they did, as will be related later on.

The expedition gave a lot of trouble at Jibouti, and eventually had to go home after running out of cash; one of its members came to Aden in a state of destitution and he told me all about the undertaking. The leader was Soliman Inger, who had procured from the Sultan a decree appointing him Amir of Somaliland, and, with that in his pocket, had gone to Buda-Pesth and picked up a Minister of War and a Minister of Commerce; the refugee who had crossed over to Aden from Jibouti was to have been the Minister of Commerce. Soliman Inger had contrived to borrow two hundred and fifty thousand marks in Hungary, had chartered the steamer and filled it with arms, and when the vessel left Trieste had posed as a Prince. He had insisted upon being called "Your High Excellency," and had conferred the title of "Excellency" upon the Minister of Commerce among others of the band. If anyone on board forgot these titles in conversation he was put on short allowance of water—rather a trial in a hot climate—or was otherwise punished, and they had all been pretty sick of Soliman Inger by the time that they had arrived at Aden. Had these people landed in Somaliland the Mad Mullah would certainly have cut their throats and have annexed their arms and ammunition. It is difficult to imagine any sane person starting such a ridiculous project, but it could not have been organized without the Austro-Hungarian Government knowing something about it—although they denied all knowledge of it to our Foreign Office.

An Intelligence Department was set up at Aden during the South African War, which obtained information that was valuable, and in the organization of which the late Sultan of Lahej, Ahmed Fadthl, was most helpful. We often exchanged visits, and he always received me with great ceremony. The Arab

In Command at Aden

manner of receiving an honoured guest is for the host, accompanied by his entourage and a mounted body-guard, to ride out a couple of miles or so to meet the visitor. The guest is saluted by the host, while the body-guard gallop round the group in a circle firing their rifles in all directions. After salutations have been exchanged in the name of Allah the Merciful and Compassionate, the whole party proceed to their destination, the mounted body-guard circling round them and firing wildly all the time. On arrival at the host's house one walks over three or four carcasses of cows or bullocks at the door, and the carcasses are then given to the body-guard, who, in company with the guest's followers, devour them. The greater the number of carcasses, the higher is the honour that is being paid to the guest.

It is a long, hot ride of twenty miles from Aden out to Lahej, and there are few trees along the road. Once, when I was riding a very well-mannered Australian horse on the way out, my steed, when we had got about half way, began to make for every tree we came near and to become quite unmanageable if I tried to stop him. He only wanted to get into the shade, and after resting under a tree for a short time became quite docile again. On getting to Lahej I found that he was suffering from bad sun-fever, and he was sent back to India as soon as it could be arranged.

On one visit paid to the Sultan I found a most abominable gramophone playing in my bedroom at night; it ground out "Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay" and similar ditties, and dreadfully out of tune at that. The slave explained that the Sultan had had it placed there for my special delectation, so its terrors had to be put up with. But while I was cursing the thing and my host's method of showing appreciation, and had made up my mind that there was to be no sleep that night, the slave came in and asked me with profound apologies if he might remove the concern, for the fact was that His Highness could not sleep without it. I replied that, grateful as I was for the Sultan's kindness in providing me with such sweet music, and much as I should regret being deprived of it, I could not think of His Highness' slumbers being interfered with. He said that the Sultan always needed it to lull him to sleep.

In Arabia the slaves are in reality household servants and

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

are well treated ; they frequently rise to high office in the States governed by their masters. The Sultan of Lahej once offered to lend me one of his to act as a cook. On my pointing out to His Highness that, if the slave came on British territory, he would be free, the Sultan did not mind, and the offer was accepted. It was explained to the slave when he arrived that he was free, and I afterwards offered to take him to India with me ; but he declared that he had been born in the Sultan's household, had lived there all his life, and had only come to me on being ordered to do so. When his services were no longer required in Aden he went straight back to Lahej.

The Intelligence Department established in Aden on the outbreak of the South African War managed to obtain a good deal of information as to the movements of German vessels bound for Delagoa Bay, and to discover other things of importance to the authorities at the seat of war. It, moreover, found evidence of German ambitions in Southern Arabia and about the Persian Gulf. I was on excellent terms with Ras Mokiman, the Abyssinian governor of Harrar, who was very grateful for the treatment that had been accorded to the new Abyssinian Primate—a Copt from Egypt—when he passed through Aden. The Primate was youngish, very uninteresting and very fond of port wine, of which I had given him enough to see him to his destination. This had secured me his blessing. His accepting the primacy entailed his passing the rest of his life in Abyssinia, which had depressed him, and he may have used the port to cheer himself up.

In the summer of 1900 a telegram came to hand from the Adjutant-General at Simla to say that I had been appointed to command the Expeditionary Force that was being dispatched from India to China to assist in the suppression of the Boxer rising. The order was subsequently altered to one directing me to proceed to Bombay and to take command of a brigade of the Expeditionary Force which was being shipped to the Far East. The Commander-in-Chief* afterwards let me know that he had nominated me for the chief command, and that the first order had been sent under the impression that the Government of India would accept his recommendation as a matter of course. The Government had, however, taken the unusual step of refusing

* General Sir A. P. Palmer.



SULTAN AHMED FADTHL OF LAHEJ.

In Command at Aden

assent, because the Governor-General* considered me too rash, and the Commander-in-Chief had then recommended me for command of a brigade. The Government of India, in fact, paid me back, with interest, for getting the better of them over the matter of Soliman Inger.

* Lord Curzon.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE NORTH CHINA FIELD FORCE

My brigade proceeds to Shanghai.—German, French and Japanese troops arrive.—Arrangements made as to international picquets.—Relations with the Germans.—Arrival of Field-Marshal Count Von Waldersee.—His position.—A parade in his honour.—German penetration in the East, and their feeling towards us.—I am ordered to Tientsin to take command of the Field Force.—Pleasant relations with other nationalities at Shanghai, and especially with the Russians.—International relations less pleasant at Tientsin.—An awkward situation at the railway station.—Unpopularity of the German contingent.—Good terms with the Russians.—Our troops get on well except with the Germans.—Von Falkenhayn.—A visit to Peking.—The Peking-Tientsin-Shanhaikwan railway.—The question of travellers on it without tickets.—The Chief Justice declares my action to be illegal.—The Law Officers of the Crown, however, support me.—A reduction of the force permits of most of the Finance Department officials being shipped back to India.—The German troops and the Indian soldiers.—A Pathan runs amok among them.—Wild disorder in the German camp.—The force that the Germans required to arrest a single Indian officer.—The Anglo-Japanese alliance.—I attend the manoeuvres in Japan.—The Emperor's banquet.—Japanese decorations conferred on my staff and myself after a delay.—A *paidza* party and a French "rag".—Our soldiers teach the German soldiers football after a fashion.—German officers and trade.—Friendship with the German general.—I proceed home by the Siberian Railway.—Russian cordiality.—The K.C.B.—A letter from General Kouropatkin.

MY brigade of four battalions* was assembled at Bombay, and from there we proceeded to Hong-Kong, but were shortly afterwards ordered to move on to Shanghai, which was said to be threatened by the Boxers. As it looked like our stopping there for a considerable time and as the winter would before long be setting in, I set about hutting my troops, which were soon reinforced by a regiment of Indian cavalry and three batteries. This force was amply sufficient to resist any enemy likely to be brought against it. There was also a fine Volunteer Battalion, composed mostly of British ; and there was a strong

* The 2nd Bengal Infantry, the 14th Sikhs, the 1/4th Gurkha Rifles and the 30th Bombay Infantry. General Creagh's brigade was the 2nd ; the 1st Brigade had gone on to Chi-li, the northern province in which Peking and Tientsin are situated.

The North China Field Force

body of Sikh Police as well. These Sikhs were not understood by those in control, and they had been infected with disloyal ideas propagated by seditious Indian societies in America ; but this difficulty was got over and they then became a most useful force. German, French and Japanese troops arrived soon afterwards, the French and Japanese only coming because the Germans, quite unnecessarily, thought fit to do so.*

The real fear with such a garrison was that there might be fracas among the troops of the various nationalities, and the best way to avoid this was by international picquets. It was not easy to get the commanding officers of the various nations to agree, but by cultivating their acquaintance I secured their consent. We arranged that each picquet should include men of all the nationalities, under a corporal of their own, with the whole picquet under a sergeant, the seniority of the sergeants being so fixed that one of a different nation should be in charge each day. It was settled that if any soldier of the garrison had to be arrested, it should if possible be effected by men of his own nationality. Men were especially selected for these picquets, and they were told that the most important thing for them was to avoid friction.

I was the senior officer at Shanghai and was tacitly accepted as Commander, while not pressing the point. There is an individuality in the military profession which makes it a sort of guild in which certain laws and customs are accepted by the soldiers of most nations, and this corporate feeling forms a bond of union between them. But the Germans do not possess this feeling, and difficulties would have arisen with them but for the attitude of their older officers. These did not consider themselves super-men as the younger generation did, and they maintained control and worked satisfactorily enough with the rest of us. The only time to ascertain the real thoughts of a German officer is after dinner, when he has eaten and drunk to such an extent that he unhooks his tunic at the neck and unbuttons four or five buttons lower down. He then gets red in the face and speaks candidly, shedding his veneer of politeness. *In vino veritas* is perhaps more applicable to the Boche than

* The Boxer troubles had come to a head in the Spring of 1900. The siege of the British Legation at Peking had begun on the 20th of June, and its relief had been effected on the 13th of August, just about the same time as General Creagh's brigade began arriving at Shanghai.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

to anyone else, and one learnt a good deal from them when in this, to them, happy condition.

I was about this time promoted local major-general.* Field-Marshal Count Von Waldersee, who had been accepted as International Commander-in-Chief of the foreign forces in China, those of France excepted, arrived at Shanghai in September. In manner and appearance he greatly reminded me of Lord Roberts, although built on a much larger scale. He stopped two days at Shanghai before proceeding to Tientsin, and I had long conversations with him; he spoke English fluently and was most agreeable. He knew nothing of the East nor of the psychology of its people, who, he seemed to consider, were created solely for the purpose of being exploited by Europeans. His position did not turn out to be a very comfortable one, for although the Governments of the different contingents, other than the French, had acknowledged it, neither the commanders nor the troops accepted it cordially. When he gave orders to foreign commanders they were received in a friendly spirit, but the manner in which they were carried out was another story. A parade of German troops was ordered for his inspection when he arrived at Shanghai, and I arranged for the British troops to take part. The French and Japanese then also did so, and at the request of the foreign commanders I took command. The question of precedence was settled by the German force taking the right of the line as Von Waldersee was in a measure our guest, and the others fell in in alphabetical order.

That afternoon after the parade, Von Waldersee inspected the camps of the British and Indian troops. He was much impressed with the simplicity and efficiency of our arrangements, and was astonished on learning about the various castes, religions and languages of our Indian soldiers. On my telling him that I spoke to them in Urdu, Hindi, Pushtu and Baluchi, he expressed the opinion that it would be better to make them all learn English!

It was evident, notwithstanding friendly relations between us, that the Germans bore us no good-will. They had been unpleasantly impressed on the way out by our position in Egypt, in Ceylon, at the Straits Settlements and elsewhere, and they

* The whole Anglo-Indian Expeditionary Force was under Lieutenant-General Sir A. Gaselee, who was with the troops in Chi-li.

The North China Field Force

were impressed on arrival by our Indian soldiers and by the small number of British soldiers that we had in China. They realized our sea-power, they envied us this and our colonies, and to a German envy is akin to hate. Our system of free trade filled them with contempt—at which I do not wonder. They saw that Bombay, Penang and Hong-Kong were full of Germans, and that Germans in Shanghai were displacing us because they learnt Chinese while British merchants, instead of dealing direct with customers, had to do so through Chinaman managers. Their Consuls and Diplomatic Agents, with the Government at their back, pushed German trade and assisted merchants, while ours did this to a far less extent, and our people in consequence failed in this unequal competition. "People who act so stupidly," they thought, "are played out and decadent. They have no army to speak of. They can only send one regiment to China. Half a million of their men can do nothing against the ill-trained Boers; we would finish that war in three months." They learnt the difficulties of fighting in South Africa later, even with only such feeble antagonists as the Hereros to deal with.

After several months spent at Shanghai, where I had been joined by my wife, I was, on the conclusion of the Treaty between the Allies and the Empress of China, ordered to Tientsin to take command of the troops there and to act as general officer commanding the whole of the Anglo-Indian forces in North China, including Shanghai, where another major-general succeeded me.* On my departure from that city all the senior officers of the international garrison, many naval officers, most of the consuls, many Chinese officials, and residents British, foreign and Chinese, came to see me off, to congratulate me on my promotion, and to express pleasure that I was remaining in China. The International Shanghai Municipal Committee officially expressed to me their "most cordial appreciation and thanks for the unfailing courtesy" which I had shown in matters in connection with the maintenance of order in the settlement, and they went on to say that my departure "was regarded

* This was at the end of June, 1901. Von Waldersee had left a few days before for home, and the 1st Anglo-Indian Brigade with large part of the other foreign contingents were leaving about the same time. Sir A. Gaselee left for home a few days later. Part of the 2nd Anglo-Indian Brigade moved up to Tientsin from Shanghai at the same time as General Creagh.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

with sincere feelings of regret." I was very sorry to leave my friends in Shanghai. I had been especially friendly with the Russian Military Agent, Colonel (afterwards Lieutenant-General) Constantine Dessino, who acted as Russian Liaison Officer with the War Office during the World War ; and I was also on good terms with the Russian colony. We had many political differences with the Russians in those days, but they in no way interfered with our social relations at Shanghai.

The relations between the various contingents composing the international forces at Tientsin proved to be very different from what they had been at Shanghai. Quarrels of a very serious nature were rife amongst them. A few days after my arrival an unprovoked attack was made on a picquet of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers by some French and German soldiers ; but, as the assailants lost some twenty killed and wounded while we had only a couple wounded, we scored heavily. There was also a misunderstanding between us and the Russians which threatened to assume an international character. It was caused by a difference of opinion regarding possession of part of the Tientsin railway station ; both nations maintained picquets in the disputed area to guard their respective interests, and these picquets faced one another with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets. The slightest misunderstanding between any of the officers or men might have led to a shot being fired and there is no telling what would have been the result. But I succeeded in settling the matter to the satisfaction of the Russians as well as ourselves.

Each important Foreign Representative in Peking had a Legation Guard, which meant British, American, French, Russian, Italian, Japanese, Austro-Hungarian and German detachments. The relations between all of them and the Germans were bad, and this resulted in frequent fights in which the onlookers often took a hand. The situation was most unsatisfactory, and it required judicious handling. The first step towards improving matters was to get on as friendly terms as possible with the various commanders. This was easily done, and they proved most reasonable and ready to meet on half way. Then, with a view to getting the soldiers of the various nations to know each other, our British non-commissioned officers, regimental and staff, were induced to give



THE ALLIED GENERALS AT TIENTSIN.

The North China Field Force

entertainments to which representatives of like ranks from the other contingents were invited ; the entertainments took the form of theatricals, sing-songs, and so forth. This example was soon followed by the French and others, and the result was most satisfactory. Still, everyone hated the German rank-and-file, who invariably were rude and quarrelsome, notwithstanding the efforts of most of their officers to maintain friendly relations between their men and those of other nationalities. Whenever the German soldiers fought with others, the lookers-on—even their Austro-Hungarian allies—joined their antagonists. There was, moreover, more than one free fight between the Germans and the Austro-Hungarian troops, who were sailors. There had never been the slightest trouble between our troops and the Americans, the Japanese, or the Italians.

After the Tientsin railway difficulty had been got over, the Russians and our people got on capitally. Our officers and theirs were on the best of terms, and both seemed to recognize intuitively that it was only our respective bunglers of politicians, coupled with German intrigue, that had kept us apart although our interests were identical. The Russian private soldiers were most kind and good-natured, and their manners left nothing to be desired ; their physique was splendid and their appearance very striking. They were young, with very pleasing faces, and they were always clean and smart, very well-behaved, under perfect discipline, and on respectfully friendly terms with their officers.

The only trouble that the Anglo-Indian troops had was with the Germans, although the German general and most of his officers were quite friendly, especially the Bavarians. The conduct of their rank-and-file was probably a good deal due to their system of rationing ; they got a morning and a midday meal, but were given money to supply themselves with an evening one, and a good deal of the money went on drink, which aggravated their natural truculence. Major (afterwards General) Von Falkenhayn was chief staff officer to the German general commanding the contingent. A man of agreeable if somewhat oily manners, cunning rather than clever, he was imbued with the thoroughly German view that any means, fair or foul, are justifiable to get the better of an adversary.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

I saw a great deal of him when visiting the German general, with whom I used to take long walks at a very slow pace and with whom I visited the Western Tombs at Peking. I never thought that Falkenhayn would have attained greatness as he has done, and it remains to be seen what verdict history will give with regard to his capacity as a soldier.

As soon as it was practicable after my reaching Tientsin I went on to Peking, to see our troops there and to make the acquaintance of our Minister, Sir Ernest Satow. He received me most kindly, and during the rest of my time in China he always gave me very valuable and cordial assistance, thanks to which many difficulties were surmounted, and by his instrumentality I was enabled to establish friendly relations with many high Chinese officials. The Allied Nations were at this time in military possession of the province of Chi-li, except for Peking which had shortly before been made over to the Chinese Government. Each nation occupied its allotted part of the province, while Tientsin was ruled by an International Commission of officers. The Peking-Tientsin-Shanhaikwan railway, being a purely British interest, was under British control, and British officers were acting as station-masters at all the small stations, while at the large ones they were supported by foreign officers and picquets to prevent quarrels and to keep order. They managed very well, and such troubles as arose were of a minor nature and were chiefly caused by foreign civilians who thought they had a right to travel free.

To disabuse them of this idea, British ticket-collectors were appointed, with instructions to chuck anybody without a ticket out; the ticket-collectors were drawn from an excellent battalion of Australian sailors who were at Tientsin. The railway had been built mostly with British capital, on which interest had to be paid, and it was essential to collect the money to do it with. The legality of my action was contested in the British Consular Court, and the Chief Justice decided against me. His view was that, China being a country in which extra-territoriality prevailed, legal power to deal with British subjects was conferred on the British Consular Courts, of which he was the head. That might hold good in British settlements in China in peace-time, but it could not apply to a part of China which we had occupied in war-time, and I refused to abide by

The North China Field Force

his decision. I reported the case to the Government of India, and they replied that they accepted no responsibility for my action—which was rather stupid seeing that they had never been asked to do so and that the matter had only been reported in accordance with their own orders. The Chief Justice, in the meantime, had referred the case to the Law Officers of the Crown. These pronounced my action to have been quite legal, and the Home Government therefore supported me.

Orders were received about this time for the evacuation as far as possible of Chinese territory (excluding the city of Tientsin), and for the international troops to be concentrated at Tientsin, with the exception of the Legation Guards at Peking and one or two special detachments. The strength of my force was at the same time reduced, and this enabled me to ship off to India a host of Finance Department officials, whose methods had been most obstructive and deleterious to military efficiency. Replying to their trivial and voluminous inquiries regarding petty expenditure had not only been occupying the time of officers who had more important work to do, but had also been the cause of wasteful expenditure owing to nobody being allowed any discretion. Some of them had unfortunately to be retained ; but in a short time the China Field Force came under the War Office and nearly all those remaining were then got rid of, together with their finance codes and their books of rules. Red tape thenceforward ceased and business was carried on rapidly and economically under a system suited to military finance in the field.

Everything was now going on satisfactorily at Tientsin, except that the Germans never became popular with the other contingents, and that there was one bad row between them and our Pathan soldiers. They were in the habit of using abusive language to the Indian soldiery when they met these in the street. I had told the sepoys, when they complained of this, that the Germans were only low-bred coolies who did not understand the amenities of decent society ; this pacified them outwardly although the insults were bitterly resented. I had expostulated with the German general, and had told him that the Indians were gentlemen of good caste who would not stand this sort of thing, adding that I refused all responsibility if there was a row. He tried to stop his men's misconduct, but he was

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

unable to do so, and the Pathans (who are more excitable than are Indians generally) eventually became infuriated. One of them took his rifle and all the ammunition that he could collect, entered the German camp, and shot three men dead and wounded two others, who died. He was eventually shot himself.

On hearing the firing I hurried to the German camp, where a state of panic existed. There were about three thousand Germans all firing at random, and the wonder was that they did not kill one another. The German general and Von Falkenhayn arrived soon afterwards, and they induced their men to cease firing, whereupon some order was restored among the panic-stricken troops; but the exhibition had given one a very poor opinion of their much-vaunted discipline. A native officer, who had tried to arrest the Pathan before he got to the German camp, had been seized by them, and he was marched down to my house guarded by a full company of infantry. He was much aggrieved at the indignity that had been put upon him in his being marched along under escort, and he demanded reparation, which it was awkward to ask for under the circumstances. To refuse him what was due to his *izzat* would have caused disgust among my own men; but the difficulty was got over by pointing out to him, and by telling the men, that he really had no grievance and that the Germans had paid him a great compliment, for it had taken a whole company of them, two hundred and fifty strong under two officers, to bring a Pathan a few hundred yards. When they arrested him they had, moreover, not known that he was an officer and an Afridi; if they had they would have told off half a battalion for the job. He said my remark was just, "chucked a chest," and went off as pleased as Punch. I often met him afterwards in India, when he never failed to remind me that he was the Pathan whom it had taken two hundred and fifty German soldiers with two officers to arrest. He never omitted to mention the two officers.

When the Anglo-Japanese Alliance was announced, my German friends made sneering remarks. But I gave an Anglo-Japanese dinner to celebrate the event, decorated the house with Japanese and British flags, and made a great splash, which the public noticed and of which a long account was given in

The North China Field Force

the local Press. We had a most pleasant evening and cordial toasts, and no more sneers were heard from the Germans. Our relations with the Japanese had ever been cordial and we had mutually anticipated the alliance.

An agreement which our Government had come to with the Germans, under which we had bound ourselves to make no railways in the hinterland of Wei-hai-wei, made that place quite useless, while it gave them a free hand in the province of Shantung. Wei-hai-wei lies in a basin surrounded by hills; it has a fine harbour protected by a small island, which our Government were fortifying when I visited the place. I pointed out that, as there was no one in the world who could attack the place from the sea in face of our Navy, it was inadvisable to proceed with these fortifications, which were commanded from the neighbouring hills, and that it would take a garrison of perhaps fifty thousand men to defend the hills against attack from the land side. The work was in consequence stopped early in 1902. The Chinese regiment in our service that was quartered there was well-drilled, efficient, and had fought bravely at Tientsin. Officered by regular British officers, it afforded a good example of what good soldiers can be made out of Chinamen when judiciously treated and properly paid.

In the summer of 1902, I was ordered to Japan to attend the annual manœuvres there. I landed at Nagasaki and proceeded to Kumamoto (where the manœuvres were to take place) in the same train with General Nodzu, who told me that he had commenced his career in the days of bows and arrows and who related many incidents of the fighting of that time. It was like talking to a man who had fought at Agincourt. The Japanese soldier is honourable, patient, ingenious and full of courage, besides being the cleanest soldier in the world and thoroughly understanding sanitation. I was struck at the manœuvres with the efficiency of all, especially the officers. The inferior quality of the horses was the one drawback that was noticeable; they do not seem to thrive in the country, were badly trained, and the Japanese did not appear to understand their management.

The Emperor gave a luncheon to all the officers, native and foreign, on completion of the manœuvres, which took place in a large mat shed that had been erected and had been

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

artistically decorated for the occasion. After his health had been drunk at the end, he passed round the tables at which the guests sat, saying a few words to them, and when he left my bear-leader suggested somewhat pointedly that I ought to depart at once—which we foreign officers all did. It transpired that after we had left there was a general scramble for the remains of the feast, as it is deemed improper for anything to be left which the Emperor gives. After the manœuvres His Imperial Majesty decorated many officers, Japanese and foreign. I was told that he wished to decorate me with the Order of the Rising Sun and my two staff officers with that of the Sacred Treasure, but that he knew we could not accept them without our Sovereign's permission. At our farewell audience with him he expressed pleasure at the cordial relations which existed in China between his troops and ours, and his regret that he could not give us the decorations he had intended, owing to our rules. He had, however, we found, telegraphed privately to King Edward, who gave his consent, and shortly after our return to Tientsin they were presented to us by the Japanese Consul-General.

International relations in Tientsin were quite good during the following winter, parties and entertainments bringing the troops together. Some of these were rather amusing. On one occasion the French general and his officers gave what was called a *paidza* party and luncheon to the officers of the garrison at a place about three miles off. A *paidza* is a sledge, propelled from the rear by a man with an iron-tipped pole, and is used very extensively for travelling or carrying goods over the frozen marsh-land. There were a large number of *paidzas*, each occupied by three or four ladies and officers. The French general was a charming man, popular with everybody; he had often been a guest at our entertainments and had seen our young officers indulging in a little mild ragging, so he thought after luncheon that he would enliven matters in the English fashion. He therefore stood up and shouted in a stentorian voice: "Gentlemen! Break the plates!" Each French officer accordingly threw his plate with its contents up in the air and let it come down with a crash, and the performance excited much laughter owing to the solemnity with which it was carried out. The party then became more lively, and our young officers and their French



LIEUT.-COLONEL MARCHAND.

The North China Field Force

comrades seized Colonel (now General) Marchand, whom Sir H. Kitchener had met at Fashoda after the recapture of Khartum and who was the chief staff officer of the French forces, and chaired him.

The Kaiser had sent an order to his general that he was to take the opportunity of being in garrison with British troops to teach his men games, especially football, and I willingly agreed to some British soldiers instructing them in the latter. The reply of our men, after they had been at the job for some little time and were asked how their pupils were progressing, was more forcible than polite. Being true sportsmen, as British soldiers always are, they suggested a match between their pupils and some of our men, but "the players on our side must be the worst we can get together so as to give the Germans a chance." The match was brought off and a crowd came to witness it, our men, although they did their best to let their opponents be victorious, winning easily. The German team played mechanically in the way dear to the German heart, its members being stout and short of breath, and after this match the services of the instructors were dispensed with; nor did the German soldiers play any more football in public.

They were engaged for two years' foreign service commencing on the date on which they left Germany, and they received two marks a day pay. I pointed out to their general that our men only got about half of this pay, were enlisted for seven years, during which they might be sent to any part of the globe, that if there was an emergency when their time was expired His Majesty could keep them till the emergency passed, and I asked him why under these circumstances his people were so fond of calling our troops "mercenaries." He smiled for a reply. I then remarked, "Owing to our silly free-trade your people are bagging systematically all our trade, and yet your *Hoch und Wohlgeboren*, who rule them, pretend to despise trade." This rose him and he expatiated on the indignity that it would be to gentlemen to interfere in such a sordid matter. "Yet you and I and all the international troops here in China are merely *commis-voyageurs*," said I, "to push the trade of our various countries." He laughed and replied: "You are quite right. I can't deny it. But I never took that view of our position before."

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

This general and I became very good friends, which helped towards the smoothing over of disagreeable incidents that occurred between our soldiers, and that sometimes occurred even between officers and civilians of our respective nations. He subsequently came to see me in India and we corresponded till his death. He was a German gentleman of the old school, with nothing of the super-man about him.

The international troops, other than the Legation Guards, were withdrawn from Chi-li in the winter of 1902-3, and the Anglo-Indian troops were withdrawn from Shanghai. So, after making over the Pekin-Tientsin-Shanghai railway to the Chinese Government I, in accordance with orders, proceeded home on leave. All the foreign generals and consuls and their staffs came to see me off, and the generals sent guards of honour and bands, except the German who explained that his regulations did not permit of his sending a guard of honour to a foreign officer; he, however, sent a band to play for an hour at my house before my leaving it—much to my amusement.

We had decided to proceed by the newly opened Siberian Railway and were most hospitably entertained at Dalny, where I received a telegram from the Secretary of State to inform me that His Majesty had been pleased to confer the K.C.B. on me.* Our party was treated with the utmost consideration during the journey through Russian territory, and on reaching London I received a letter from General Kouropatkin, then Minister of War, of which the following is a translation :

“ During my visit to the Far East I was informed of the good comradeship and perfect cordiality which never ceased to exist between the forces of our Sovereigns. It is in a spirit of the greatest pleasure that I pray you to accept my sincere thanks for the many signs of kindness and of friendship which you have always shown towards Russian officers, and more especially towards General Dessino.”

* General Creagh had been awarded the C.B. in the previous year.

CHAPTER XIX

EXPERIENCES WITH THE CHINESE

Admiral Yeh and Commodore Sah.—Sah's experiences in the war with Japan.—His views as to the Dowager Empress's conduct in connection with the Boxers.—General Mai.—A difficulty in connection with his presents.—A dinner with him.—Yuan-shi-kai.—How I got on good terms with him.—Unofficial visits to him.—His entourage.—His action in connection with the young Emperor some years before.—His alarm at a suggestion of mine.—An inspection of his troops.—Chang-chi-tung.—A visit to the tombs.—Chinese smells; an Archbishop's view of them.—Handing over the Pekin-Tientsin-Shanhaikwan railway.—His Excellency Hoo.—His performances with the bottle.—A dinner with Yuan-shi-kai; Hoo at his best.—A tribute to Na-tung.—Farewell to Yuan-shi-kai.

MANY of the high Chinese officials, whose acquaintance I made owing to the good offices of Sir E. Satow, spoke English fluently, and two of them who became my greatest friends had been trained in our Navy. They were Admiral Yeh and Commodore Sah. Both of them took a very gloomy view of the state of their country and deplored its present condition. They agreed that China suffered from a want of patriotism and of honesty, especially among the official classes. Commodore Sah told me that in the war with Japan he had commanded a cruiser and that the shell provided were full of sawdust instead of explosive; when he told me this the tears ran down his cheeks. He said that it was disgust at such a state of things and hopelessness of reform that caused the Chinese Admiral who was commanding in chief and whose name I have forgotten to commit suicide.*

I asked him how it was that so clever a woman as the Empress Dowager could have hoped to free the country of foreign interference by supporting a rabble such as the Boxers, backed only by the small and ill-organized Chinese army, when she must have known that what occurred would bring foreign avenging armies into the country. He replied: "You know that the Chinese

* It was Admiral Ting.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Empire forms a world in itself to the majority of the Chinese people, and they and the Chinese Government are indifferent to foreign commerce, of which the advantages are not comparable to the disadvantages. Its necessary accompaniment is the intrusion of foreigners. Their upsetting manners and customs are a perpetual source of annoyance to the people and to the Government, who both hate and fear them. Ignorant persons at Court persuaded the Empress Dowager that the Boxers were invincible, as magic had rendered them bullet-proof. The few honest people who had access to her pointed out the absurdity of this. She was in doubt, so she decided to consult the household gods and she received an answer favourable to her supporting the Boxers, which was of course arranged by the priests who were on the side of the ignorant and designing courtiers. She, however, remained unconvinced, and she said she must have proof positive of their invincibility. So some Boxers were brought into the palace court-yard and were fired at by soldiers with rifles. The bullets on hitting them fell to the ground at their feet. The Empress Dowager witnessed the performance which was of course a trick from beginning to end. It, however, completely deceived her, and she thereupon gave support to the Boxer movement, which was only declared to be a rebellion after the defeat of the Boxers and the army at Tientsin."

I was also on very friendly terms with General Mai, who in his youth had served under C. G. Gordon in the "Ever Victorious Army" which suppressed the Taiping rebellion, and he loved to talk of his old chief. He had suppressed the Boxers in his province with an iron hand in spite of orders to the contrary from the Court, and had in consequence been placed on half-pay—which is, I fancy, no pay at all—but that did not trouble him much. He was always offering me presents, which it was difficult to refuse without giving him offence. When one declines a present in China, the would-be giver attributes it to the present not being considered of sufficient value, and he returns to the charge with a more costly one. Mai sent me a very valuable pair of ponies one day, which I returned with the excuse that my "mean house" had not the stabling to accommodate His Excellency's beautiful animals. He replied that he would like to build the requisite stabling in my "honourable house"—which placed me in a quandary. The only thing to do was to tell him the



GENERAL CREAGH, THE CHINESE BRIGADIER AND MAJOR WINGATE
AT THE EMPEROR'S TOMB.

Experiences with the Chinese

truth, viz., that British officers were not permitted to accept gifts from the people of a foreign country in which they may be quartered. Fearing that the interpreter might, in his version, give offence, as they almost invariably do, I had recourse to Admiral Yeh to whom I explained the situation. He was a friend of General Mai's and he got me out of the difficulty.

At a subsequent interview General Mai pretended to know all about foreign customs, but to have forgotten for the moment when he made the mistake of offering me a present. To show that I had overlooked this, he hoped that I would come and dine with him, as he knew that that was the foreign mode of cementing friendship, so I went to dine with the old gentleman. The *menu* consisted of small dishes of birds'-nest soup, sharks' fins, eggs sixty years old, cocks' combs, and other dainties which, having a good digestion, I consumed voraciously. My host was much pleased to find that I enjoyed Chinese "chow," and in the interests of politeness I vowed that I loved it, although it is hard to imagine anything more disagreeable to the British palate than such a dinner. One of the guests then remarked that I ought to try the real Canton delicacy, consisting of taking a baby mouse by the tail and letting it wander through a plate of honey. The head is then thrown back, the mouse inserted in the mouth, and as it gives a faint squeak it is swallowed just as a foreigner swallows an oyster. This may have been related as a joke, but being told in English, which the others present did not understand, it elicited no remarks from them.

When orders came for the city of Tientsin to be returned to the Chinese, we learnt that it was to be made over to Yuan-shi-kai, the recently appointed Viceroy of Chi-li.* The various Powers were at this time vying with each other in courting the friendship of the Chinese authorities, with a view to future trade concessions, and the new Viceroy was perhaps the most influential among these officials, as he was devoted to the Dowager Empress and she to him. Feeling sure that it would be of advantage to my country to cultivate cordial relations with him, I determined to do so. Now, unless it could be arranged otherwise, he would have to go round Tientsin, calling publicly on each of the foreign generals, which for a man of his high standing would mean a

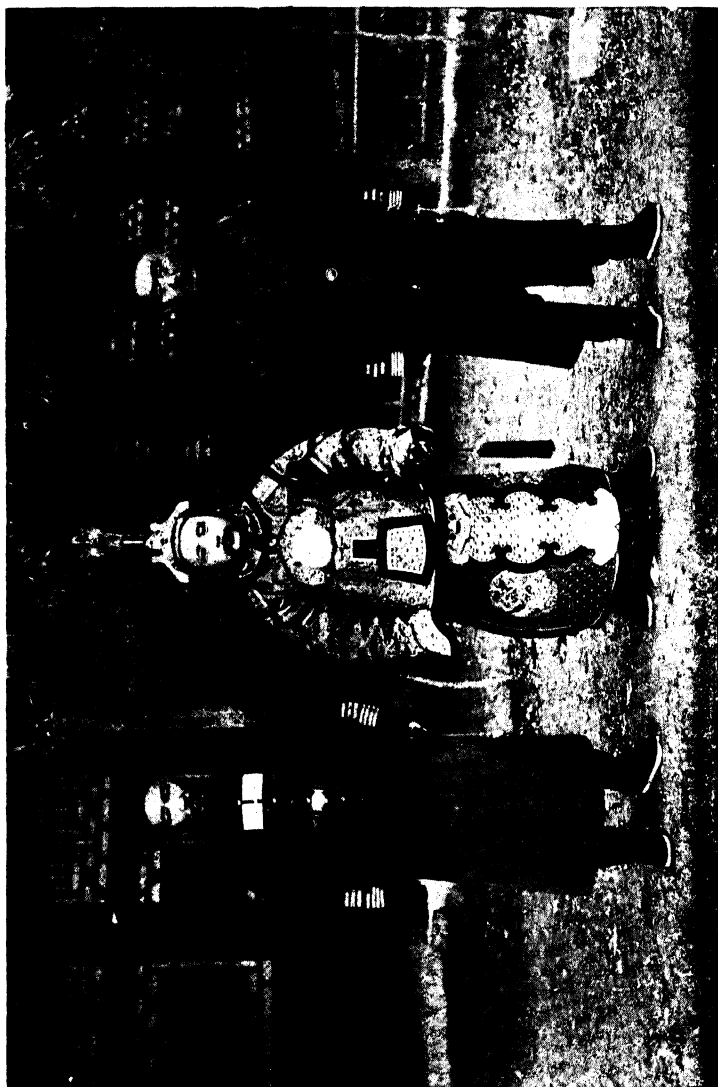
* Yuan-shi-kai had replaced Li-Hung-Chang on the latter's death in November, 1902.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

great "loss of face"—as the Chinese express it. There could be no doubt that if I could "save his face" it would be a great help towards my establishing friendly relations with him. Therefore, when we foreign generals held a meeting to decide as to the procedure to be adopted on his arrival, I suggested that we should all meet at the French general's house, which was on the road that he must take to reach his official residence, and that we should there, together, receive His Excellency's visit. The proposal was accepted after some demur, and on getting home I sent a confidential Chinese friend to tell him that I had arranged the matter with some difficulty, in deference to his "face."

He paid the visit accordingly. The Chinese crowd who lined the route did not know whether he called on us or we on him, but he no doubt induced them to take the latter view. Anyhow, he was most grateful to me, and the friendship thus begun grew from day to day until our relations became in the highest degree cordial. He told me that if I called on him officially he must return the call officially, and that if he did so would have to call on all the other generals officially. So he suggested, as the best way of my seeing him, that when I went for a ride any time I should turn into his residence informally and by a side door; orders would be given that I should be admitted instantly, and nobody would know that the visit had taken place. Therefore during the rest of my stay in China I very frequently visited him, got on terms of intimacy with him, and greatly liked him. He came to lunch with me non-officially, and was very good company; and at a later date, when he had become President, he frequently wrote to me and always received any friend of mine, who came with a letter of introduction to him, with great distinction.

In 1902 he was a man of about forty-five years of age, and in the eyes of Chinamen almost indecently young to occupy so high a position as that of Viceroy of Chi-li, the premier province in the empire. He was a good-looking man of robust physique and of most pleasant manners, who made no effort to impress people with a sense of his wisdom or of his self-reliance. He perhaps trusted too much to the faithfulness of a coterie of Cantonese forming his entourage, who would have been quite ready to betray him had they thought that it would benefit them. They were men who had been educated either in the



H.E. YUAN-SHI-KAI AND A.D.C.'s.

[To face p. 236.]

Experiences with the Chinese

United States or in England, and who were imbued with Western ideas that were wholly unsuited to the conservative instincts of the Chinese. They reminded one of the same sort of people in India. Like their Indian prototypes, they could see no difficulty in changing time-honoured prejudices and ancient religions, and they were not actuated by patriotism—which does not exist in our sense in China or in any Asiatic country other than Japan—but by the desire to acquire wealth and power.

Yuan-shi-kai's defection had enabled the Empress Dowager some years before to dethrone and to imprison her son, the Emperor. He had acted disloyally and treacherously in deserting that youth, who was relying on his support to carry out well-intentioned, if foolish, schemes of reform. He excused himself to me with regard to this by urging that the proposed reforms were too radical and too sudden and that, had he acted otherwise, China would have been bathed in a sea of blood. But the Cantonese coterie were proposing to Yuan that he should adopt measures very similar to those which the young Emperor had contemplated, the only difference being that he was to be the President of a Republic, in place of there being an Emperor with restricted powers. I frequently told him that no reforms ought to take place till there was a strong Government in Peking, supported by an army of adequate strength but not so strong as to excite the suspicion of foreign nations; also that reforms should be introduced gradually and in accordance with the wishes of the gentry and the *literati* of the whole country, not with the wishes of merely a small clique.

On my suggesting that, as the present dynasty was sure to fall, he ought to make himself Emperor, he begged me never again to make such a suggestion, as someone might hear. "In China," he added, "walls have ears and you might get my head cut off." So that subject was never broached again.

He asked me to inspect his troops stationed at Pao-ting-tu. They were fairly well trained, except as regards musketry; he kept all the ammunition at Tientsin and would never issue any for musketry-training, which could not on that account reach a high standard. On its being pointed out to him that efficient musketry formed an essential part of the soldier's duty, he replied: "So long as they get no ammunition they cannot revolt." I had a long and interesting conversation at Pao-ting-tu

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

with Chang-chi-tung who had been Viceroy at Woochow and was on his way to Peking; he was reputed to be the best scholar in China, but he was now very old and much addicted to opium. He had always preferred the British to any other foreigners, but none of them did he really like. The view he took was that of all the foreign devils the British were the least noxious, which is indeed the opinion generally held by officials and people in China.

The German general and I went together to visit the tombs of the Chinese dynasty then in power, which are situated in a beautiful country, like an immense well-wooded English park; Major A. W. S. Wingate, my chief staff officer, was of the party. There was a profusion of beautiful flowers such as are never seen in any other country and which have gained for China the title of the "Flowery Land." We were met at the tombs by a trio of officials in charge, consisting of a prince, a duke and a brigadier-general. They showed us the tomb which was, under orders from the Dowager Empress, being prepared for the then Emperor, her son. On it being hinted to one of them that the tomb would probably soon be occupied, he laughed and replied quite frankly. The Emperor shortly afterwards was stricken with a "mortal illness" and was put into this tomb with great ceremony.

Agriculture and inter-provincial trade absorb almost the entire energies of the people of China, and little attention is paid to rearing animals. One often in North China sees a man driving a ploughing team comprising a cow, a donkey and a woman. The sewage of cities and houses is all used up for manuring the land, being converted into briquettes for convenience of transport, and then diluted in tanks and applied through watering pots. As a consequence of this system the smell everywhere is appalling. Nobody really knows what a smell is till he has been in China. The filth of a Chinese town or village is unexampled in any part of the world that I have been in, although that in India takes some beating. On someone expressing wonder to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Peking at his having lived so long in that city without contracting disease from the smells, which were ever present and which must harbour microbes innumerable, the prelate replied: "There you are wrong, for they harbour no microbes. Even a Chinese microbe can't exist in a Chinese smell!"

Experiences with the Chinese

When, at the time of my departure for home, it came to handing over the Peking-Tientsin-Shanhaikwan railway, I told the official who was taking over, an Excellency, Hoo, that there was a large money-balance which would be made over to him. Yuan-shi-kai, who would share in this balance and would also gain great "face" for getting the line into his hands as Viceroy of Chi-li, was delighted when he heard of this. His Excellency Hoo arrived in due course to take over and was received with the customary ceremony, which consisted in placing before him a tray on which were a bottle of champagne, two glasses, and two cups of tea. The practice on such occasions is for the host and the guest to drink a glass of champagne each, and then to "go through the motion" (as the drill-book says) of drinking tea, although none of it is actually consumed—pretending to do so is a hint to the guest to take his leave. But there was much to explain to His Excellency, who was moreover an agreeable and attractive personality, the interview was prolonged, and before I touched the tea he had consumed a great deal of champagne, the original bottle having been many times replaced. His performance in that line completely outclassed me—I wasn't in the same field with him—but when at last I touched my tea and he took his departure he was as unaffected by the champagne as if he had been drinking water.

Yuan-shi-kai gave a big dinner at his official residence that night to all the British and Chinese who had been in any way connected with the railway, and I found myself sitting between him and my friend Hoo. The dinner consisted of both British and Chinese dainties, with wine of all kinds; most of the Chinese stuck to the British dishes, but I fell to on the Chinese sort and pretended to enjoy them; Yuan-shi-kai put this down to his having the best *chef* in the country. Hoo, during the repast, stormed the champagne, consuming huge quantities without its having any effect on him. When I remarked to Yuan-shi-kai that His Excellency Hoo must that day have consumed the best part of a dozen of champagne without his being affected, and must be a very remarkable man, Yuan replied: "He is. But I could drink him under the table, although I never drink much now as I have so much important work to do. You should see Na-tung—he could drink us both silly!" (Na-tung was the mandarin who had been selected to go to Germany to convey

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the Chinese apology for the murder of the German Minister by the Boxers.) The insides of Chinamen are different from those of the rest of the human family.

Before leaving for home I paid a farewell visit to Yuan-shi-kai, who expressed his regret that he could not come to the railway station to see me off, because if he were to he would have to pay the same compliment to every other foreign general on his departure. He, however, sent a high official to represent him. We parted with mutual regret.

CHAPTER XX

DIVISIONAL COMMANDER

Take up command of the Mhow Division.—Its extent and the work involved.—Responsibility for grass and dairy farms.—Condition of their accounts on arrival.—The wrong sort of "credit balance."—The absurdity of this farming system.—Plan and estimate required of a boar.—The mismanagement of horse-breeding by Government in India.—The bad effect that the dispute between Lord Curzon and Lord Kitchener had among the natives.—In command of a division during the manœuvres in honour of the Prince and Princess of Wales.—Transferred to the Rawal Pindi Division.—Most of the British troops up at Murree in the summer.—Sedition about Rawal Pindi.—The plague used by agitators to stir up the people.—A riot, and how it was dealt with.—The law's delays.—Absurdity of the demand for "Home Rule for the Indian Nation."—Lectures on military policy as approved in high places.—Objections to the policy.—Proposal to ration the native troops in peace time.—The Amir Habibulla Khan's visit to India.—Meetings with him.—At Murree for the hot weather.—Its advantages.—Headquarters and young officers, a stupid suggestion.—Financial difficulties of young officers in India.—One reason why the Government is so out of touch with the people in India.

ON reaching London I was given six months' leave and was directed, on its expiration, to proceed to Mhow to take over command of the division that had its headquarters there; I duly took up that appointment in January, 1904. Much had changed in India during the seven years that I had been out of the country, and, in particular, the price of everything had risen considerably.

The Mhow Division was a very large one and its troops were spread over a wide extent of country, so that training and inspecting them and looking after their welfare gave ample work to the divisional commander, and left him little time for studying his profession. In that calling one has got to be up to date, and to know about recent inventions in arms and ammunition, and so on; and the higher the rank one has attained, the more important does this become. Our civilian rulers never seem to realize this either at home or in India. What would they think of a doctor who never looked into a medical volume except when required to pass an examination? The higher the position

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

that an officer reaches in his profession the more deeply he ought to study. It is the same in nearly all professions or businesses.

In addition to his military duties, the general at Mhow was responsible for large grass and dairy farms, costing much money and involving the keeping of complicated accounts. In this he was aided only by some military subordinates who were quite unfitted by education and experience for the job. There was an almost equally useless Inspector, living at Poona, three days' rail away, who knew very little of grass, or dairy farming, or accounts, or anything else, but who came round periodically to express opinions as to how things ought to be done—which he did not know himself. The accounts were of the usual ponderous and silly character typical of Indian departmental ideas, and my predecessor, relying on the statement of a subordinate, had signed a balance sheet showing a large credit, for which he had been profusely thanked by the Government of India. I sent for the poor subordinate and told him to produce the large credit shown, which he was unable to do; the business instead of being in credit was many thousand pounds in debt, so an accounts officer was sent to Mhow to examine into the matter—he was so deaf that I could not explain much to him and it is a wonder how anybody else did. The result of his audit was that there was found to be no credit, but that several thousand pounds were due to the native banker who was treasurer of the concern. The expert recommended, and the Government of India concurred in the recommendation, that, as the accounts had been kept in accordance with Finance-Department Regulations, no personal responsibility attached to anybody!

The Military Department, however, decided that the unfortunate subordinate should be tried by court-martial and directed me to frame charges. I replied that I was unable to do so and expressed the opinion that, if the case came before a court-martial, this would find him guiltless, because the Government of India gave him more work to do than any human being could possibly get through, and paid him so inadequately as to amount to sweating. He settled the matter by taking his discharge, which he was allowed to do without court-martial or punishment. The result was that the Government had to stand the loss of the "credit balance" and had to pay the treasurer a large sum. Similar cases occurred elsewhere, the

Divisional Commander

consequences of undue centralization which leaves no discretion to anyone outside the "Secretaries to Government." I had, however, to continue my farming operations, involving loss to the Government. Imagine dairy or grass farming operations carried on from Simla or Delhi (where everything is centralized), on lines that have been approved by young clerks and old heads of departments at the India Office !

Under this sort of administration "farmers" used to send their cows by train from districts in which the indigenous cow gives plenty of milk to districts in which the indigenous cow gives little, with the result that the good milking cows ran dry owing to change of food, for India is a great continent and the fodder in its different provinces naturally varies. As an example of red tape, it may be mentioned that at one farm under me there was a piggery, and I was told to increase its establishment by a boar for breeding purposes, which would come from England. I accordingly wrote officially to Headquarters asking for one ; my letter was returned with an "objection" from the accounts babu to the effect that the request could not be sanctioned, pending the receipt of a "plan and estimate" of the boar. Owing to mismanagement the Government has contrived to destroy horse-breeding in the country ; they have killed off all the indigenous breeds except two which, being in native States, they have been unable to control, and have replaced them by nothing. There are not to-day remounts enough in India to mount a single regiment of horse, whereas in former years there was no difficulty in mounting a large force of cavalry. But, worst of all, the additional petty officials required for management where their farming activities take place, add to the existing horde who pillage the wretched villagers and bring the Government into bad repute.

The quarrel between Lord Kitchener and Lord Curzon, which excited all India about the time that I reached Mhow, put renewed hope into the hearts of seditionists. Lord Curzon, it will be remembered, as a result of the decision arrived at, resigned the Viceroyalty. It was very detrimental to British prestige that these eminent officials did not settle their differences without taking the public into their confidence. Lord Kitchener, who fully recognized the evil effects of publicity in this dispute, told me that it was not his fault that the affair was not kept

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

secret. But secrecy is very difficult to secure in India. The Government keeps nothing to itself, and this has come to be much more the case of late years than it was formerly.

When their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales (Their Present Majesties the King and Queen) visited India in 1905, Army Manœuvres were held at Rawal Pindi under Lord Kitchener, and I was ordered up from Mhow to command one of the divisions. It was the second time that I had been on duty in India with a Prince of Wales. The deficiency of artillery to permit of the troops effectively opposing any properly organized enemy was much commented on at these exercises, but it had not been remedied up to the time that I finally left India. When I raised the question afterwards as Commander-in-Chief, the reply was that the Indian Army had only to be prepared to meet unorganized antagonists. There were less than thirty guns per division, and there were only two efficient heavy batteries for the whole army. We have since that time seen to our cost the result of the refusal of the Government of India and of the Secretary of State to supply it with sufficient guns to enable it to meet all comers.

Shortly afterwards I was transferred from Mhow to the Rawal Pindi Division,* and was glad to get north again and to be near Murree where (and in the surrounding hills) a large number of British troops are quartered—in fact, all that can be spared from the plains are sent up there in summer. This is a wise policy if not carried to excess, as it keeps the men fit. Tippoo, the famous sultan of Mysore, once remarked that if he possessed such splendid fighters as the British soldiers he would keep them in the most healthy stations and would feed them on the fat of the land, as he did his hunting leopards, and that he would only loose them on his prey in the hot plains when his enemies had to be promptly suppressed. Still, some British troops must be kept down in the plains during the hot weather to ensure peace.

There were many seditionists and agitators in Rawal Pindi, some of them native lawyers. Such people are only found in the towns in India, for the agricultural classes are quite loyal and can only be stirred up to riot and disorder when some fire-brand from the town has worked upon their fears for themselves

* Sir O'Moore Creagh was promoted Lieutenant-General in 1905.

Divisional Commander

and their religion. The plague was at this time somewhat prevalent in the villages round about, and the mischief-makers were busy manufacturing " public opinion " by way of squeezing boons in the shape of Legislative Councils out of the Government, so that there should be more Departments and more Government employment for themselves. Disturbances and outrages in the villages were just what the agitators wanted, and the plague gave them the very opportunity that they needed. So they spread the story (already mentioned in Chapter XVI.) that the deaths were not caused by plague, but by the poisoning of the wells under orders from Government. Fortunately there were numbers of pensioned native officers and old soldiers in the villages who explained the situation, so that the seditious preaching had no effect ; but in Rawal Pindi itself there were no loyal men to provide such explanations and the rabble had been worked up to a high state of excitement.

Civil authority, therefore, decided to bind some of the seditionists over in their own recognizances to be of good behaviour, and summoned them to undergo the process of the civil court, which was next door to my house. As it happened, an Artillery officer had to come to me on duty from the Artillery lines just at that juncture. He arrived covered with mud that had been thrown at him by a crowd, who had also assaulted him ; and just then a great noise sounded outside. On going out I saw several of the disaffected Indian lawyers on their way to the court as ordered, but followed by a threatening rabble, so I at once ordered the lawyers to send the crowd back to the city, telling them that if it did not depart at once in an orderly manner I would disperse it by military action. As they did not obey, but on the contrary were insolent, a squadron of British cavalry was telephoned for to disperse the crowd, and a squadron of Pathan cavalry was ordered to gallop to the town, to keep order there, and to arrest any disturbers of the peace. Directly the mob heard the hoofs of the galloping horses they made off, and the organizers of the riot were caught and were in jail within an hour or so. All disturbance then ceased ; but a church had been gutted and some other damage done.

The leaders of the rioting were subsequently tried by the Punjab high court, but the trial took a considerable time and was not finally decided for ten years. Such is justice in India ;

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

it is slow and is so expensive as to be quite out of reach of the poor. The procedure adopted in the courts exactly suits the disaffected, to whom it serves as an excellent advertisement and gives them *éclat* among their kind. The law is uncertain, they may escape punishment, and even if they get an adequate one they, as likely as not, will be let off, as a "boon" to their friends. Natives used formerly to hold lotteries on the result of Indian high court trials; but they have abandoned the practice as they found that in most cases the stake-holders had died before the result was known and that the stakes were then not forthcoming.

It should always be remembered that the Indian, be he Musalman, Hindu, Sikh, Jew, or native Christian, regards his obligations to his co-religionists as having the first claim on him, that of his country a very bad second. Religious jealousy between the different creeds is only kept from breaking bounds by the supremacy of the British Government. Each province, nay almost each district, is inhabited by people of various religions and mostly by various races. Demands for "Home Rule for the Indian Nation" are absurd, and are only made by a small minority consisting of unorthodox classes of the towns—men of unwarlike race. What would they do if they got it? The warlike classes would cut their throats. It is just and necessary that India should be ruled according to the views of its inhabitants, and to give every class its due representation; but it is neither right nor proper to let one small class represent the lot.

About this time an officer of the General Staff from Army Headquarters appeared at Rawal Pindi, who was touring India to instruct the army in military policy, as then accepted in high places. He gave lectures, which all officers of field-rank had to attend and which were supposed to be confidential; but their purport became public property through a manuscript having been thrown carelessly into a waste-paper basket and it was discussed in every officers' mess in the country. The policy expounded was the military necessity of annexing all territory beyond the Indus between the Administrative Frontier and the Durand Line—which meant the conquest of all the frontier tribes with whom we have political relations, and the subsequent garrisoning of their countries. Such a policy if put in force would have brought on severe fighting, would have cost much

Divisional Commander

money, and would have very seriously affected recruiting owing to service in garrison in such a region being most unpopular. The minds of the officers who attended these lectures were much exercised, for they well understood what such a policy would mean.

Another and even more impossible scheme was at this time appealing to the Simla people. Native regiments serving beyond the frontier, or in certain oversea stations, or when in the field, get free rations from the Supply Department, and it now occurred to the white and black babus that, if this plan was generally adopted in India in peace time, Government would save money. They forgot that, whereas beyond the frontier or in the field there are no seditionists and the men are influenced by their officers and not by village stories, in India the men frequent bazaars, go to their homes, and are apt to hear every sort of wild anecdote. The sepoys would soon be told that the Government rations had been polluted so as to destroy their caste or religion. The babus also forgot that large flour-stores would have to be built in every station, that there would be damage to their contents by rain, by white ants, and so forth, and that there, moreover, would be loss owing to the usual swindling on the part of petty officials. The babus, furthermore, forgot that this scheme would involve much extra labour upon regimental officers, who already had quite enough to do in training their men and in keeping themselves. The project, fortunately, came to nothing.

The Amir of Afghanistan, Habibulla Khan, passed through Rawal Pindi on his way to and from the Durbar that he attended at Agra early in 1907, and I had long conversations with him on both occasions. He talked quite freely of his policy, said that he would be foolish and dishonourable to be disloyal to the British alliance,* and declared that he would never think of such a thing. He also spoke about artillery and fuses and field fortification, and he told me that he had worked hard for ten years in his father's arsenal at Kabul; his knowledge of armament was certainly considerable. He said that he was a great believer in railways, but that he could not introduce them into his country as soon as he should like to, as his people were not yet ready for such an innovation. People in England imagine that the Amir, being an absolute monarch, can do what he likes; but he has

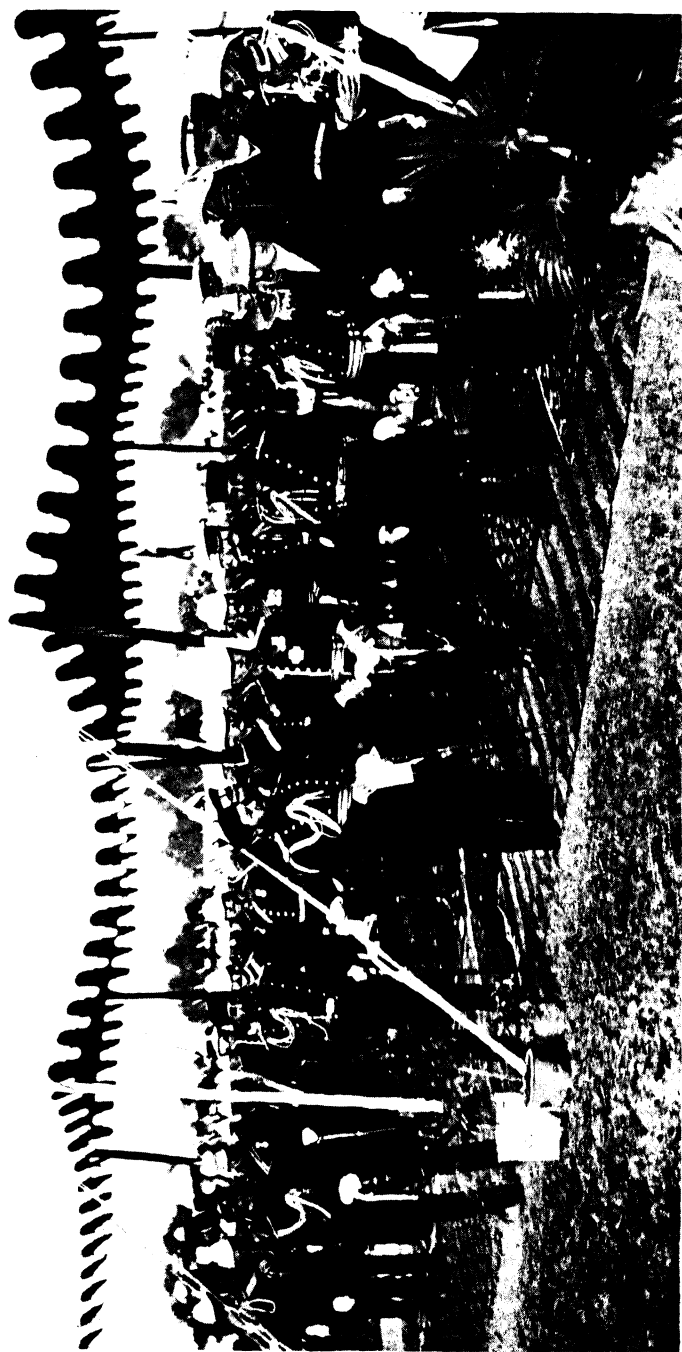
* A Treaty had been signed in March, 1905.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

to consider the religious prejudices of his subjects and of their bigoted priests, and also the political views of the chiefs of the turbulent tribesmen over whom he rules. I concluded that he was thoroughly loyal to the British alliance, but may remark here that the loose conversation about aggressive military policy, such as was caused by the lectures mentioned above, caused him much embarrassment. When proposals to annex tribes on the North-West Frontier are openly discussed amongst officers of garrisons in the Punjab or at the Simla Club, they are reported by his agents to the Amir and his people. These begin to fear that their turn will come next.

I went to Murree in the hot weather—the first hill station I had been to, excluding short visits to Simla and to Mahableshtar. It is only twenty-six miles from Rawal Pindi, and close round it are accommodated in the hot weather all the troops, and their families, who can be spared from garrison duty in the plains. It is a splendid place for instructing troops in hill warfare, and as there are no headquarters of local governments or departments one is not worried by the continuous round of entertainments which is customary in those hill stations where the majority of the inhabitants are civil servants or ordinary civilians. But as nearly all the troops were British, one was rather out of touch with the real India up there. While I was there a circular arrived from Headquarters pointing out the evil of young officers taking their leave in hill stations, where they may get into hopeless debt, and recommending that they should be encouraged to spend it on shooting expeditions. This illustrated the ignorance that prevailed at Simla with regard to Indian conditions. Game in India is almost everywhere preserved (except for small game such as snipe or duck), so that, for officers to get good shooting, they would have to travel great distances. Moreover, the hot and the rainy season are the breeding time for wild animals in general, when shooting most of them is prohibited, and in the cold season officers are occupied with training and military duties. Furthermore, one cannot shoot big game without beaters, and beaters are nowadays very expensive in India. Even in cases where officers might have got shooting, the cost would have generally been prohibitive.

I have seen many junior officers living almost in a state of starvation, and this is especially the case with those who wish



THE AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN AT RAWAL PINDI.

Divisional Commander

to qualify for the Indian Army. They have to live in discomfort to be able to pay tutors in the Indian languages in which they have to pass before being admitted. They do get an allowance from Government, which is supposed to cover the expenses that this involves ; but the allowance was fixed years ago and it is now totally inadequate for the purpose. This is not as it should be. Seeing army officers living under such conditions does not impress the people of the country with their position. Nor does it permit of their visiting native gentlemen and thereby learning the manners and customs of the country while they are yet young and while their minds are susceptible to outward impressions. The Government of India has no real sympathy with its army, although it is lavish enough with its words on the subject.

That those in authority of the highest grade are so much out of touch with the people and with the country is, I believe, largely due to the annual flitting to the hills. The situation has, moreover, been aggravated of recent years by the enlargement of the various Legislative Councils, which prevents high officials from touring as they formerly did throughout the cold season. If the Government is to stay six months in the hills, these Councils should hold their meetings then, not in January, February and March as is now the custom. The Legislative Council of the Governor-General has become a sort of parliament which assembles at Delhi during those months, and all the heads of the numerous departments of which the Government is composed have to attend its sittings—to ensure a Government majority, it is said. The result is that, as the Simla season lasts from April to October, they have only two months left for touring, which include the Christmas holidays. Moreover, the heads of Government departments, although they pose as authorities on India, have spent so many years in the hills or out of touch with the natives of the plains that they in reality know nothing about the population other than that semi-English-educated minority who represent nobody but themselves.

CHAPTER XXI

AT THE INDIA OFFICE

I become Secretary to the Military Department at the India Office.—A first interview with Lord Morley.—Calumny about the Sikhs.—The peacefulness of the agricultural classes in India.—How the villagers deal with agitators.—The difference in towns.—The position of the Secretary to the Military Department apparently neither military nor civilian.—Duties of the post.—The Military Member of the Secretary of State's Council.—The Military Committee.—Difficulty over a document marked "secret" and its result.—Relations between the India Office and the War Office.—Various tasks of the Secretary to the Military Department.—The dispute between Lord Kitchener and Lord Curzon over the question of dual command.—The charge against Lord Kitchener that he had decided to abolish this before he had personal knowledge of the question.—The situation when he arrived particularly unsatisfactory.—The acquisitiveness of the Military Department in India.—The vested interests of this institution.—Evils of the dual system.—Readiness of the India Office to approve such military proposals as India put forward.—Question of deficiency of guns.—Unsound views on broad military policy entertained by the India Office and the Government of India.—Appointed to succeed Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief.

IN the summer of 1907 I was offered and accepted the appointment of Secretary to the Military Department of the India Office. I was ordered to proceed to London and to sit as a member of an Anglo-Japanese Military Committee assembled there. On its work being completed I took up my new appointment.

On my first interview with Lord Morley, then Secretary of State, he asked with some anxiety about the state of the Sikhs. Certain authorities had told him that some Sikh regiments had shown symptoms of disaffection. The same story had been spread in India, but there was not the slightest truth in it ; so I replied vouching for their loyalty, which subsequent events, notably the World War, have proved. But many British civil officers are surrounded by petty native officials of doubtful loyalty and unwarlike caste who hate the brave and honest Sikhs, cultivators as they mostly are, and who miss no opportunity of maligning them ; the calumny was propagated by these

At the India Office

evil counsellors. Such accusations made against a whole people or caste, who always get to know of them, do much harm, but they were frequently slung about by British officials, by newspaper correspondents, and by others who possessed no personal knowledge of the classes they defamed. Among all classes in India, as elsewhere, there are bad people as well as good ; but I can affirm as regards the agricultural classes of Northern India—and I believe it is the same with the cultivators all over the country—that they are quite loyal. When mischief-makers have tried to raise disaffection in villages, their neighbours have either promptly arrested them or else have given information to the police.

But it is different in the towns. When outrages have been committed in these, the neighbours have never arrested the offenders nor informed the police. It is in the towns, and by non-agricultural classes, that sedition is organized, and when the towns get too hot to hold the agitators they make their headquarters in Europe or in America. There are, however, many Indian emigrants in America drawn from the agricultural classes who, being out of reach of their natural leaders, are influenced by these agitators, the agitators being supported by subscriptions to which the Germans have largely contributed. The emigrants are then sent back to India to try to stir up rebellion and to create disturbances in their villages.

But the villagers have invariably suppressed the disturbances and have made over the delinquents to the police. We have recently heard frequently of their acting thus, and I myself have known many cases of it of which the British, and even the Indian, people know nothing. The native Press generally fails to mention such incidents. Sikh emigrants returning after this fashion and stirring up trouble have never received the smallest support from the village Sikhs, from whom the Indian Army is so largely recruited. The Government of India ought long ago to have appointed men of the emigrants' castes to act as consuls at places abroad where Indian emigrants of the cultivator classes have settled, so as to look after these and to see that they are not seduced by disloyal intriguers. What I saw in Shanghai when there in 1900-1 convinced me of the need of this.

The rule when I got my appointment was that this generally

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

was given to a major-general, and could be given to a lieutenant-general, but that it was never given to a full general. It was considered inadvisable to have an officer of full general's grade in such a position, as he might, owing to his being of such high rank, interfere with the recommendations of the Commander-in-Chief in India, while his proper business merely was to see that the recommendations were according to regulations; but this healthy rule was not observed later on when I was Commander-in-Chief. If the Secretary to the Military Department (the tenure of whose appointment was limited by age, not by time, as all other military appointments are) held the post for ten years, he received a pension in addition to his military one under civil rules, and to attain this pension he might retain the appointment when promoted full general. The consequence was, that an officer who had been Secretary to the Military Department for ten years got a higher pension than any other officer in the Indian Army, no matter how exalted an appointment the latter might have held. Like so many other rules in the India Office, that governing the tenure of this particular appointment must have descended from remote antiquity. The job can be given to a civilian, and I never could make out whether technically it was a military or a civilian appointment. Had it been the former it would have been subject to the usual rule of a four years' tenure; had it been the latter the officer holding it would have had to retire from the army after retaining it for three years. Neither was the case.

The duty of the appointment was to prepare for presentation to a so-called "Military Committee" all cases referred from India to the India Office. If financial questions were involved, the Military Committee passed the case on to a Financial Committee; after dealing with the case the Financial Committee passed it to the Permanent Under Secretary of State, who, in his turn, passed it to the Parliamentary Secretary of State, who in his turn took it to the Secretary of State for India. If a case involved finance, the Secretary of State sent it to Council; if it didn't he either sent it to Council or decided it himself, as he thought best. Before a case can be considered by Council it has to lie on the Council table for ten days, so it will be seen that there is no cast-iron hurry at the India Office.

On the Council there is always one old soldier. As this mili-

At the India Office

tary representative may keep his appointment for seven years, he is not unlikely to have become a bit stale and to have fallen out of touch with the art of war and with the details of military administration by the end of his time. In deciding military questions the old soldier is aided by the dozen or so of fellow-members of Council, civilians ancient and modern, two of whom are Indians. It seems a curious body to deal with military problems, some of which may be, and often are, of vital importance to the Empire. The Military Committee mentioned in the preceding paragraph is a detachment of the Council, told off to do the preliminary canter; it consists of the one old soldier and of from three to five civilian Members of Council. When I was Secretary in the Military Department, the old soldier was a lieutenant-colonel, late of the Indian Political Department—the method of recruitment of that institution has been described in Chapter VII.—who was, owing to his rank of lieutenant-colonel, supposed to possess the military knowledge qualifying him to act as military representative on the Council. Neither the Permanent Under Secretary of State nor the Secretary of State, needless to say, possessed any military knowledge whatever; nevertheless, the Council was prepared to go into all military questions, some of them requiring great technical knowledge. The Finance Committee, moreover, decided whether military measures were worth the money they would cost. The whole situation was Gilbertian.

Shortly after my taking over, a very important document from the Government of India, marked “secret,” was handed to me to deal with. I took it to the Permanent Under Secretary of State and said that to put it through the usual mill would be dangerous. This was like a bomb. The idea of not dealing with the paper through the usual channel was abhorrent to the official mind. There was a prolonged discussion as to how the almost insuperable difficulties that the problem created were to be got over, and many authorities well versed in office routine were consulted. The discussion was much too protracted and too tedious for me to recollect it at this distance of time; but the Government of India in consequence of what passed received instructions to send fewer “secret” documents and more “confidential” documents in future—which, apparently, got over the difficulty. The Secretary of State himself

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

often "rode off" the various Committees, and dealt with me direct.

Neither the India Office nor yet the Government of India at this time viewed the War Office with particularly friendly eyes. I subsequently, when Commander-in-Chief in India, came to the conclusion that this was because things used to be done which would not stand the criticism of the Army Council. Both while at the India Office, and later when I was Commander-in-Chief, I endeavoured to remedy this, and I always found that the utmost benefit to the Service resulted therefrom, and that the War Office authorities were most helpful. It is deplorable that departments so closely connected as regards national affairs should not always maintain the most intimate relations, but the fault certainly was not on the side of the War Office.

Besides preparing cases put forward from India for consideration by the authorities in the India Office, the Secretary in the Military Department is in command of all officers on leave or on duty who have come from India. He also, in conjunction with the Naval Transport Officer at the Admiralty, makes troop-ing arrangements for India and arranges for individual passages. He furthermore deals with recommendations for promotions and for honours and rewards in the case of officers of the Indian Army. He is constantly called on to interview officers who are at home (and their wives) on every sort of subject, official and private, and to make sure that questions affecting the interests of the army in India are correctly put before the Secretary of State. I always regarded it as a duty to point out to those who were my colleagues at the India Office what evils would result were the responsibilities of the Commander-in-Chief in India to be interfered with, or were any attempt made to hamper him in the maintenance of discipline.

Many proposals in connection with Lord Kitchener's Indian Army Reform scheme kept arriving ; so that I read up the whole case between him and Lord Curzon, and for the first time came to understand the subject in dispute completely in all its bearings. When he arrived in India he found the army there to be under dual *command*. (There was no question of dual *control* ; the Army was always completely controlled, as it ought to be, by the Government of India.) "An army commanded by one bad general," said Napoleon, "is better than an army com-

At the India Office

manded by two good ones." Lord Kitchener has been accused by opponents of having made up his mind and of having prejudged the Military Department at Headquarters before he went to India. They have charged him with having decided to abolish the dual command before he knew anything about it from personal experience. But it was hardly necessary for him to go to India to discover what is a military commonplace, and, like every other soldier, he would have realized from early days in the Service the folly of the organization that existed at the time of his arrival in the country. He would have known all about the evils of such a system before he set foot in India. And yet he took no active steps to remedy the system when he first took up command, but waited to see how the system worked, possibly anticipating the accusations that would be brought against him by all those whose vested interests would be prejudiced by its abolition.

He had, as it happened, been preceded by two Commanders-in-Chief who, for different reasons, had played an almost passive rôle in military affairs, the first because of ill-health which ultimately caused his death while in harness, the second because he was for a considerable time only provisionally appointed, and even when made substantive was only acting as a stop-gap till such time as Lord Kitchener could be released from South Africa. But even long before these officers took up the supreme command, the Military Department had already abandoned its civil rôle and had arrogated to itself executive command of all the administrative services of the army ; its Member of Council, working direct with the Governor-General, had practically assumed command of army administration. All that was left to the Commander-in-Chief was the army's training ; and even that could not be satisfactorily carried out without funds, and the Military Member alone controlled these and made them available or not as seemed good to him.

During the passive regime of Lord Kitchener's two immediate predecessors, the Military Department had become more grasping than it had ever been before, and it thought much more about budgets than about military efficiency, especially during the period immediately preceding Lord Kitchener's arrival in the country in November, 1902. The consequence was that the army was in a most parlous condition when he took command. Every

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

soldier in India knew it, and he at once saw that it was so himself, and well understood what he was up against. But he probably did not fully realize at once how much he would be hampered in effecting those reforms without which the Indian Army was—as it had been for years—totally unfit to take the field against organized European troops, or even—as had been amply proved in the Afghan and the Tirah campaigns—against a stout Asiatic foe. In waiting to deal with the question of dual command so long as he did, he was perhaps actuated by motives of delicacy, for Lord Curzon had pressed the home authorities to send him out and had supported him at the outset in carrying out certain reforms, the urgent necessity of which were apparent even to a civilian.

Lord Kitchener probably did not, when he raised the question, appreciate to the full what an attack would be made upon him in India the moment that he attempted to interfere with what was a great vested interest. For, by duplicating work, the Military Department made available whole hosts of useless appointments for subordinates, which provided legions of officers possessing interest with life-long employment in the Government of India Secretariat, and which enabled them to interfere so as to secure soft military jobs for their friends and for the friends of their civilian allies. When field operations took place anywhere these officers could rush off to them for a brief space, and, even if they did not secure staff appointments with the troops in the field themselves, they secured them for their friends. These people stayed at the front for a brief space, got medals and decorations, and for the rest of their lives posed as hardened warriors. The Governor-General's aides-de-camp figured largely in this class, which our Russian allies used to designate as "pheasants." In my opinion Lord Kitchener made a mistake in not tackling this octopus at once, for to effect any reforms without being hampered by the Military Department was out of the question. As it was, he found that any proposals which he desired to make to the Governor-General had first to go through the Military Department, and were, *en route*, freely criticized by secretaries and clerks, and finally by the Military Member, not only from the financial but also from the military point of view. This not only caused excessive delay in any case, but it was naturally resented by the Commander-in-Chief and by his staff.

At the India Office

There cannot be two different authorities giving advice to a Government. Lord Kitchener's civilian opponents, and even some distinguished generals, contended that, while the Commander-in-Chief was the Governor-General's first military adviser, the Military Member was required as a second or alternative adviser to whom the Viceroy could, before accepting them, refer proposals that had been made by the Commander-in-Chief. But if there are two people giving authoritative advice to a government concerning military matters, the results will be chaos and irresponsibility. If the head of the army does not possess the confidence of the government, the remedy is to replace him by someone who does. It is no remedy to seek advice from irresponsible or less experienced officers, the more so when one knows only too well that some such can always be found who will, in hopes of personal advantage, give almost any counsel that they think will be acceptable with those having the disposal of rewards in their hands.

I do not recollect during my time at the India Office the Government of India ever putting forward any military proposal which accorded with accepted policy, that was refused in London. There is no reason to suppose that if proposals to make good the defects in the Transport, Medical and other Departments necessary for an army of the strength sanctioned, had been put forward, they would have been rejected. But I cannot say the same with regard to the deficiency in guns. The idea of the military forces in India being called upon to face an enemy organized and armed on European lines was never taken into account either by the Government of India or by the India Office, while it was held that their artillery was sufficient to meet an Asiatic adversary. That a conflict with a European foe was never contemplated seems strange in view of the Anglo-Russian Treaty. India and the Empire had many causes of difference with Turkey, and it might safely have been concluded that our establishment of close relations with Russia would lead to further estrangement from the Ottoman Empire and would throw the Sultan into the arms of Germany—an object which the latter country had for long years been endeavouring to attain.

One wonders whether the Foreign Office and the India Office ever exchange confidences, or whether these two Departments of State keep each other at arm's-length, as the India Office

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

certainly did the War Office. It is extraordinary that no arrangements seem ever to have been made to co-ordinate the general policy of two great offices which in war become interdependent. As Secretary to one branch of the India Office it was not my business to criticize policy ; all I had to do was to see that projects emanating from India in connection with military matters fell in with that policy and accorded with existing regulations. There was, at the time, no interference on the part of the India Office with the military responsibilities of the Government of India. That occurred afterwards.

In the summer of 1909 Lord Kitchener's extended tenure of the appointment of Commander-in-Chief was about to expire, and I had, shortly after joining the India Office, been promoted full general in the ordinary course, by seniority.* The establishment of general-officers of this rank on the Indian list is three. Soon after my promotion the two who were senior to me retired, and I thus became senior general-officer of the Indian Army. The rule then was that the appointment of Commander-in-Chief had to be given alternately to an officer of the British and an officer of the Indian service, and on the post being offered to me I accepted it.

* Sir O'M. Creagh was given the G.C.B. this year.

CHAPTER XXII

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA : EARLY EXPERIENCES

Meeting with Lord Kitchener at Poona.—My supposed mission.—An arrangement come to by Lord Kitchener that the military budget should be fixed for five years.—He captures my special railway carriage.—Sir D. Haig appointed Chief of the General Staff.—Sir P. Lake.—Question of tours.—The Finance Department backs out of the quinquennial arrangement.—My first tour.—Rawal Pindi.—Arrangements made for pensioners to see me when on tour.—Their pleasure in this.—Visits from Indian officers and native gentlemen.—The riot of three years before recalled.—Attock.—Peshawar.—How troubles at the front are sometimes stirred up.—A visit to the Khaibar.—The Afridis carry out a sporting fixture.—Kohat.—Thul.—The "Instigator of Crimes."—Bannu.—Dera Ismail Khan.—Multan.—Sukkur and its useless fortifications.—Hyderabad.—The custodians of the two monuments on the battlefield and how the dissatisfaction of the Government representative was appeased.—Karachi.—The 129th Baluchis.—How a squabble between Hindus and Musalmans in Kathiawar was avoided.—Bombay and Calcutta.—Organization of the General Staff.—An Intelligence Section to deal with internal India.—The arrangement with the Criminal Intelligence Department that had previously held good.—Waning prestige of the Governor-General's Executive Council.—My house at Simla.—The excessive gaiety at the place.—A question of precedence.—Another question of precedence.—A prelate and his wife at a dinner party.—The trifles with which the time of the Executive Council was taken up.—The case of a lawn-tennis court.—The case of six silver spoons.—How the Secretaries of Departments of Government went behind the backs of the Members of Council at the head of their Departments.

PROCEEDING to India late in the summer, I met Lord Kitchener at Poona on his way to Tuticorin to join the mail-steamer for the Far East. He told me that the general opinion at Army Headquarters was that I had been sent out for the sole purpose of surreptitiously proposing reductions in the army, which the Secretary of State would support, and that this opinion was shared by the Governor-General. Lord Kitchener, indeed, seemed to hold the opinion himself. I replied that such an opinion was not flattering to me nor to the Secretary of State, but that anyone who knew Lord Morley must deeply resent such an imputation put upon a man of his well-known honourable character, and that the suggestion was wholly untrue. Lord Kitchener seemed quite satisfied and wrote a letter which he asked me to give to the Governor-General on getting to Simla,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

which I did. Its contents no doubt were to the effect that there was no truth in the statements that had been put forward.

He told me that he had settled the annual military budget for the ensuing year with the Finance Department, and further that he had induced the Governor-General to agree to recommend to the Secretary of State that the military budget should henceforward be fixed for five years on a definite compact basis, excluding, of course, unforeseen war expenditure or changes in armament necessitated by new inventions. This change, he said, would avoid the annual quarrel between the Finance Department and the Army Department, and the perpetual friction arising therefrom between their members. He believed that the proposal would result in economy, efficiency and decentralization, and that it would reduce the abnormal clerical work and red tape. My experience was to prove how right he was. Lord Kitchener had not possessed a General Staff—the creation of this had only just been sanctioned—and he did not tell me much about the state of the army. In the absence of a General Staff he could not have known very much about it.

I went to see him off at the railway station, where I found—and I only mention this because it was amusing and, perhaps, characteristic—that without saying “by your leave” he had bagged the Commander-in-Chief’s special railway carriage for his journey, to which he had no right; I shortly afterwards left in a more modest one for Simla. On arrival there it turned out that what Lord Kitchener had told me about the supposed mission on which I had come was quite true, and that in addition to this the fact that I was not one of the “Simla Gang” was resented. The Governor-General appeared to imagine that I was the villain in some deep-laid plot against his dignity; but Lord Kitchener’s letter seemed to ease his mind.

My request that Lieutenant-General Sir D. Haig should be sent out from home as Chief of the General Staff had been sanctioned, and he arrived about six weeks later. In view of the possibility of Sir Douglas being in due course required for some higher appointment, I arranged that the first divisional command that fell vacant should go to Major-General Sir P. Lake, then in Canada; therefore, when two years later Haig was appointed to Aldershot, Lake was in the country available to take his place. It took some time to bring the new organization

Commander-in-Chief in India : Early Experiences

in connection with the General Staff and other departments at Headquarters into force, mainly on account of difficulties with the Finance Department and because the touring season was commencing. It was my intention that my heads of departments should as far as possible go on tour, so as to get into touch with the officers of their departments who were working with troops and so as to get to know the generals and their staffs, and I told the heads of departments that officers were to be allowed full authority to exercise the functions allotted to them without interference by their superiors. There had been a good deal of such interference, I gathered.

On raising the question of arranging the military budget on the quinquennial grant system (which Lord Kitchener had told me had been agreed to) the Finance Member was found to have altered his views, and the matter had to be dropped. There were many ways that money could have been saved had I been given a free hand. The existing centralized system was costly. The staff in Burmah was altogether excessive. There was great waste over ammunition-columns in consequence of unsound organization. The Governor-General's and the Governors' bodyguards might have been dispensed with. The Municipality of the town of Karachi wanted to buy the military cantonment there, with a view to transforming it into residences, offices and municipal buildings, and they were prepared to pay for it more than enough to construct a new cantonment outside the city ; but the Finance Department blocked the project with notes, cross references, ridiculous queries and general obstruction, and the question remained hung up departmentally till I left India. Opposition and red tape were met in every case.

I started on my tour from Simla at the end of October and went straight to Rawal Pindi. The Commander-in-Chief is allowed a special train when on tour, and I always halted it at places where there were many old pensioners, or at centres where these could assemble. They were delighted at this procedure and came in crowds. They loved to talk about old times and about their old regiments, in which they often had sons serving. Some were very old men and related stories of the Mutiny ; they used to ask about their old commanders and wanted to know whether these had sons serving in the Indian Army and they were delighted if I could say it was so. " New Sahibs don't know," they said,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

"but the sons of our old commanders will ; they will know our sons and will understand how loyal and true we are to the King-Emperor, and that we will never listen to the *badmashes*.* For hawks fly with hawks, pigeons with pigeons." They enjoyed paying me these visits. I always took them into my carriage, and had tea and cigarettes with those whose caste permitted their doing so, being able to speak all their languages. They always said that a visit to me would increase their *izzat* in their villages and added : "Now that the petty officials and railway babus see that we are friends with the Jangi Lat Sahib they will be afraid to bully us or to squeeze us." An Indian officer expressed the general feeling of his class when he said to me : "Sahib, in days gone by we old soldiers received great honour in our villages, but nowadays the washer-man puffs his foul tobacco in our faces." (The washer-man belongs to one of the lowest castes of village menials, and to puff tobacco before a superior is considered most impertinent and improper in India.)

In addition to these four meetings I, during the whole time that I was Commander-in-Chief, devoted one day a week to receiving visits from Indian officers and native gentlemen, seeing them individually and not in groups. Indians will only talk freely when alone with their host. I had plenty of spare time, but it was not so with the Staff at Army Headquarters. Owing to excessive centralization and insufficient establishment its members were overworked and had time neither for study nor for the recreation needful to keep them mentally and bodily fit. Few people in England realize the immense amount of work that has to be got through by the General Staff in India.

At Rawal Pindi the Municipality invited me and most of the officers of the garrison to a garden-party to meet the notables of the town, at which they presented me with an address thanking me for the way in which I had, when commanding the division there three years before, dealt with the troubles caused in the place by seditionists. They said that, had those troubles not been promptly suppressed, they would have spread all over the Punjab—although I doubt whether this would have been the case, seeing that their instigators were non-warlike people whose only weapon is the tongue, with whom the warlike classes of the Punjab had no sympathy whatever. But the town rabble

* Brigands, rascals.

Commander-in-Chief in India : Early Experiences

would have done much damage had it not been restrained. Some of the guests at the garden-party were the very lawyers who had got up the disturbance. They greeted me cordially, for they knew that I bore no malice, and they were indeed harmless enough individually and not people who would ever risk their skins. The trouble had been organized from Calcutta, and I have always thought that the Government were more to blame than the immediate instigators of the riot.

From Rawal Pindi we went to Attock, where there ought always to be a company of British infantry specially guarding the great bridge over the Indus ; but I could never get the money required to build the necessary barracks. The ancient fort does not command the viaduct. From thence we went to Nowshera and on to Peshawar, where I inspected the large garrison and received visits from Indian officers and the local gentry. Both Peshawar and Rawal Pindi are full of contractors who have made large fortunes out of army contracts. It is well known that, with a view of making money out of trans-frontier expeditions, these people often excite the trans-frontier tribes to commit raids and mischief generally, and in this they are often aided by local petty officials. But there are of course other causes for these troubles, and Government's frontier policy has much to answer for. The building of the railway along the Kabul River from Jamrud towards the Afghan village of Dakka, for instance, excited the wrath of the Mohmands, the Afridis and the Afghans, while its military advantages, such as they were, were altogether outbalanced by its political disadvantages. Lord Morley stopped the work on it and eventually had the rails removed, while he was Secretary of State.

After a short time spent at Peshawar I went on to Jamrud and up the Khaibar to Lundi Kotal. On the way up the pass we encountered an Afridi army of five hundred men marching down. They halted, and their commander asked me to inspect them ; he became quite communicative when he found that I could talk Pushtu. His detachment was composed of men of one sub-clan and it was going to join in an inter-tribal battle which was to take place by appointment at a certain place—like a football fixture. His command was well armed and looked very business-like. When we parted I wished them good luck and asked to be informed how they fared. They replied that everything

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

was in the hands of God and that they certainly would let me know the result of the fight, but, as it turned out, their side was defeated with the loss of fourteen killed. These inter-tribal encounters occur periodically, but, under agreement with our political authorities, do not take place in the pass.

After returning to Peshawar I went by the road through the Adam Khel country to Kohat, and after a halt of two days there proceeded to Thul, where I made a short stay, wishing to get into touch with the Waziris in my own way. There was good partridge shooting around Thul, one always has beaters for this, and one can learn much from conversation with them. Some years before, I had known a Pathan gentleman in these parts who was much trusted by our Politicals and who often brought them information which led to reprisals being taken against his neighbours. We soldiers named him among ourselves "the Instigator of Crimes," and believed that he faked outrages for his own purposes. Such people, and the petty officials by whom Politicals are surrounded, are often not above suspicion, so that it is well to get information personally so as to check their stories.

From Thul I went on to Bannu—a torrid spot in the hot weather, where the officers of Indian regiments were disgracefully housed and had to pay exorbitant rents to Government for their wretched accommodation. But when I tried to get the rents reduced my "Financial Adviser" produced all sorts of objections in the shape of finance rules. The next place to stop at was Dera Ismail Khan, a vilely hot place and the home of every insect which tortures man; the Indus was at the time making encroachments in the direction of cantonments and everybody hoped that they would be washed away. At Multan the cavalry regiment there was had out for manœuvres, but these could hardly be seen on account of the dust. Our next halt was at Sukkur, where there is a strategically very important railway bridge over the Indus; the totally obsolete fortifications guarding this bridge hamper the growth of the city and much money was being wasted on their repair. The municipality asked me whether I would object to having the works removed, and I told them that there would be no military objection when the request reached us. As it never did while I remained in India, it presumably was still going through the "usual channel"; for the city fathers were very anxious to have their request complied with.

Commander-in-Chief in India : Early Experiences

Going on from Sukkur to Hyderabad, we visited the battlefield of Miani which is close by. There are two monuments on the field, one to the British and Indian soldiers who fell in the combat, the other to a Baluch chief who lost his life there fighting on the other side. Each had a caretaker, the one in charge of that to our men was paid by Government, while the one in charge of the Baluch chief's memorial was paid by certain Talpurs. The Government caretaker got less pay than his rival, as he complained to me, saying that he, who represented the winning side in the battle, ought at least to get as high wages as the caretaker who represented the losing side; but the Indian officer on my staff dealt with the question most effectively. He explained that the Great Government had won millions of battles and therefore had millions of caretakers of such monuments to pay, and that the sum spent was large and would go on increasing to goodness knows how much, so that the Great Government had to be careful. But the Talpurs had only this one monument to keep a caretaker for, and as they had lost the battle and their country they would never want another, so they of course could reasonably pay their man more than the Government could. This argument seemed to give complete satisfaction. The Government caretaker remarked: "Yes, Sahib, it is even so; and, after all, the *izzat* of being custodian of the monument of the winning side counts for a great deal." In such ways runs the Oriental mind.

Going on to Karachi after a week's shooting at Hyderabad, I spent some days there. My old regiment, the 129th Baluchis, were in garrison and I spent one pleasant evening with the officers and men. On my way by sea from Karachi to Bombay a stay was made at Porbandar in Kathiawar, visiting notabilities. There was a quarrel going on at the place between Hindus and Musalmans over a procession which the latter wanted to take along a road, where a tree that was regarded as sacred by the Hindus had its boughs extending right across the road. The Musalmans wanted to lop off some branches so as to get their paraphernalia along, the Hindus would not allow one to be touched, and there were all the elements of a row. As there was a vacant bit of land in front of the tree, I suggested that the road should for the occasion be diverted through this; this device was, I believe, adopted and no more was heard of the dispute.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

From Bombay I went by train to Calcutta, where the Government then was, arriving in the middle of December, and we spent the Christmas holidays with the Governor-General at his country seat near Barrackpur. The organization of the General Staff had now to be proceeded with, involving many details; but there is only one of these that need be mentioned here. The Intelligence Department up to now had existed only in a very primitive form, and above all things it was necessary to establish a section dealing especially with internal India in view of the prevailing unrest. Information with regard to sedition was only obtained from the Civil and Police departments, and these were out of touch with the army. I knew well how out of touch the Government of India was—and is—with the peoples of the country, but found that the system existing at Army Headquarters was to trust entirely to the civil authorities for information regarding internal India, although there was no co-operation between them and the military. Military officers commanding troops in various parts of the country knew nothing about the movements that were going on; they were told nothing about them from Army Headquarters, and they were nevertheless expected to keep their regiments from becoming contaminated.

The Criminal Intelligence Department was supposed to give information to military officers regarding sedition in the army and had its agents in cantonments and in regimental lines. These were quite well known to officers and men and it was a bad arrangement, as the only people who can keep disaffection out of the ranks are the Indian officers, who if they are not trusted will not do it. British officers were even being instructed from Army Headquarters not to discuss such matters with the native officers, while reports of sedition in regiments were being made by the Criminal Intelligence Department to Army Headquarters behind the backs of both British and native officers. Now, I have not a word to say against the Criminal Intelligence Department. It was most ably run by its Director, who gave me the greatest assistance throughout; his subordinates carried out their duties loyally and well, although they were constantly abused by the seditious junta who had the ear of Government. But, even so, they ought not to have been employed in regimental lines. So the special section of the General Staff was organized and full means of obtaining information were

Commander-in-Chief in India : Early Experiences

placed at its disposal. It summarized monthly all the information that it obtained concerning seditious movements, and it sent copies of the report to all general-officers and regimental commanders, which latter were directed to explain the purport of these communications confidentially to their Indian officers and to tell these that I placed complete reliance on them.

I noticed that the respect in which the Governor-General's Executive Council had formerly been held had evaporated. What occurred at its meetings had in the past been kept confidential, but this was no longer so. Enmity existed between some of its members, who treated differences of opinion with regard to public matters as private quarrels, which were often carried on with more heat and personal animus than was seemly. Some of the members, moreover, exchanged confidences with native politicians, and there was a vast amount of petty intrigue in progress. An Indian nobleman of high rank gave me the Indian view of things when he said : " The Government of India is now like a Native State Durbar."

In due course we all moved from Calcutta up to Simla for the hot weather. I was allowed a very fine house up there, for which I had to pay the fine rent of £800 a year—it was only partially furnished and was a good deal out of repair. It was quite unsuitable in many ways, especially as it had no accommodation for Indian guests who had not adopted foreign customs. To entertain such there must be special arrangements for representatives of certain castes, the members of which may not cook nor eat with those of other castes. Notabilities belonging to such castes often came to Simla to see me.

The place has always had a bad reputation for excessive gaiety. Dinner-parties, dances and theatricals were of nightly occurrence, and in the afternoons there were race-meetings, polo-tournaments, dog-shows, etc., without end. Stupid gossip or " shop " replaced intelligent conversation, and the subserviency to superiors was truly oriental ; when the big man gave his opinion nobody dared to differ. High officials full of pride sometimes mistook want of politeness for dignity, and their ladies were in a perpetual state of anxiety concerning their precedence. There was such extravagance that many of the officials were either in debt or could only just scrape along. Amusement in moderation is all very well, but no one can work efficiently who takes it in such

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

violent doses, and on this plea I avoided as many functions as I could. The other officers of the Headquarters Staff followed my example and were only too glad to have an excuse for escape. I was perpetually being pestered to give singing and dancing officers extensions of leave, after their commanding officers had refused it, on the plea that "my party cannot get on without so-and-so." But I always refused.

Shortly after my arrival, at a dinner-party at my house at which there were among the guests two ladies, one of whom was a "major-general" and the other a "colonel," quite by mistake I took the "colonel" in to dinner, while the "major-general" was taken in by somebody else and sat on my left. She refused to eat anything or to speak during the meal, and when it was over and the guests rose from the table she made a bolt of it, called her conveyance and disappeared. Thinking that she had been taken ill, I sent a polite message next morning asking as to her health and expressing the hope that this had been restored. This did not improve matters, for she sent me a minatory note, expressing astonishment at the insult which had been put on her; from this I discovered what was the cause of the trouble. So the Military Secretary was at once sent off with a free hand in the matter of apologies, which I told him to use regardless of expense to assuage her fury. This he succeeded in doing after much difficulty.

But it is not the ladies alone who are touchy in such matters. There was a levée at Viceregal Lodge, which I was ordered to attend with my staff, and we presented ourselves at the appointed hour. All was ready. The Governor-General sat on his throne waiting for the presentations to take place. Presently an A.D.C. came up and asked me to go forward with my staff to be presented; which we did, and then left. Next day a Lieutenant-Governor officially informed me that he was in his own province and therefore took precedence of me, and that I should not have allowed myself to be presented before him, and thus to have "usurped" his position. Something had prevented the good man from arriving to time, and he apparently thought that I should have known the movements of so important an individual, and ought to have awaited his convenience. He did not get the answer that he deserved, as it would have led to an official row, and he was merely told that I had had no intention of

Commander-in-Chief in India : Early Experiences

hurting his dignity. I explained what had occurred, and said that, if anyone was to blame, it was the Governor-General's staff, but that as far as I was aware people at such functions were presented as they arrived. This pacified him. He disclaimed having any personal feeling in the matter, but explained that he felt bound to maintain the dignity of his position.

Once, when I was a colonel, I had attended a dinner-party at which a bishop and his lady were guests. The bishop ranked as a major-general or a lieutenant-general—I forget which—and was the senior guest. After dinner there was music, and the prelate and his wife performed repeatedly. We all got very sleepy and longed for the bishop's good lady to make a move, and things were arriving at the limit and had become desperate when the worthy bishop came up and asked me to sing. I replied that I only knew one song : " Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace." He took the hint, ordered his carriage and took his lady off—otherwise we might have been there still.

Much of the Executive Council's time was taken up in discussing trifles which ought never to have come before it at all. For example, there was a commissioner who, with the object of cultivating the acquaintance of the local gentry and official subordinates in one of his districts, spent £10 out of his Government grant in making a lawn-tennis court near a club started for native officials. The auditor held that this transgressed the spirit of finance rules. The commissioner referred the case to the Lieutenant-Governor, who referred it to his local financial adviser, who returned it with copious notes from several subordinates whose business it was to elucidate such conundrums. The Lieutenant-Governor then noted the case on, thinking it much too important to be dealt with under the powers granted to a local government. So at last it reached the Government of India in the Finance Department for orders. There it was minuted upon by clerk after clerk and by secretary after secretary, and was finally minuted on by the Finance Member, till it reached the Governor-General, who ordered that it should be considered in Council. At the Council, which was presided over by the Governor-General, the case was considered for a longer period, and it elicited more discussion, than did my report on the inefficient state of the army.

The rigid rules issued by the Government of India, under

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

orders from the Secretary of State, with regard to officials receiving presents—rules intended to deal with bribery and corruption, but which merely affect those who do not take bribes—produced a similar case. A Parsee gentleman of position gave a friend of his who was an official a wedding-present of half a dozen silver spoons. This was against rules ; but the official did not see how he could refuse, so he referred the case to the local government. The local government could not take the responsibility of deciding, so sent the case to the Government of India. After copious minuting, it was passed on to the Governor-General, who decided that it must come before Council. This meant that all the correspondence and memoranda had to be compiled in a file, and the file had to be circulated to each Member of Council. When at last the Council solemnly considered the problem they decided that the spoons must be returned, for a contrary decision would have had to be referred to the Secretary of State. The decision must have given dire offence to the donor, who had only followed what is the English custom in like cases.

Each Member of the Executive Council is supposed to be in charge of a Department of the Government of India, but the Departmental Secretary is not Secretary to the Member in charge of the Department, and consequently owes him no allegiance ; he is Secretary to the Government of India *in* the Department and has free access to the Governor-General, to whom he can take any case at any stage and can take the Governor-General's orders thereon. The consequence is that the Governor-General can interfere with the Member of Council's work behind his back. During the Governor-Generalship of Lord Minto the reply that he was going to give with regard to some case that I was submitting to him was sometimes cut and dried beforehand without my knowledge. Such procedure hampered my work and caused ill-feeling between the Army Headquarters Staff, who were my advisers, and the Army Department which was advising the Governor-General behind our backs. During my last three years, however, when Lord Hardinge was Viceroy, he and the Secretary of the Department of which I was supposed to be in charge did not work together in this fashion over my head. But they might legally have done so had they so desired.

CHAPTER XXIII

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1911

Lord Hardinge succeeds Lord Minto.—Hopes that this might mean a change of policy disappointed.—A visit to Burmah.—Reduction of expenditure for the military service pressed for by the agitators.—Their reason.—The Indian Army at this time barely sufficient to maintain internal peace and to guard the frontiers.—Attitude of Lord Hardinge in the matter.—Difficulty placed in the way of cold-weather touring.—The coming of the King and Queen announced.—Plan of holding a camp of exercise abandoned owing to lack of forage.—The question of boons to be granted by His Majesty.—*Nazarena* and *saswarna*.—Boons with regard to education granted in deference to the agitators.—No boons to the Indian Army except a fortnight's pay and the opening of the V.C. to native ranks.—The good done by His Majesty's visit.—The reverence entertained by Indians for their Sovereign totally different from that entertained for even the highest officials.—Their traditions regarding the hereditary principle.—The Durbar at Delhi: remarkable scenes.—The great review and the King's inspections.—The officials' camps.—One Chief accused of not having saluted the King properly.—The doubts that prevailed amongst the Chiefs as to how they were expected to salute.—Reason for the difficulty.—Precedent must be adhered to.—Their Majesties leave Delhi.

LORD HARDINGE succeeded Lord Minto as Viceroy in November, 1910, but previously to this Lord Crewe had taken the place of Lord Morley as Secretary of State for India. One had hoped that the changes at the top might be accompanied by a stronger policy against sedition, and by some steps being taken to prepare the Indian Army for the duties it was likely to be called upon to perform before long; neither of these hopes, however, was to be fulfilled. The small agitating class in the country was daily "conciliated" by being given more Government appointments, and the opinions of the elected members of the Legislative Council were allowed to influence more and more the government of the country. Futile experiments were tried, which might have been suited to England, but which were totally unsuited to India, and many of which were opposed to the ancient rights, customs and usages of the people and were strongly objected to by the mass of these.

A strong spirit of radicalism prevailed in high places. This

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

gave great offence to the natural leaders of the Indian people, but it also caused many of the less important persons of some prominence to place themselves under the banner of the All India National Congress. Little was being done at the same time to improve the military position, and every proposal to do so was shelved. I went to Burmah and stayed a month in that country visiting the Burmo-Chinese frontier and going into the question of possible reductions in the Military Police ; but no action was taken on my recommendations regarding this, even though economies would have been effected had they been adopted. The only thing that would be considered satisfactory evidently was a reduction of expenditure on the purely military side, in deference to the opinions of the agitators. These had discovered that the agreement with Russia was supposed to eliminate all danger of the Indian Army being called upon to meet the forces of a first-class Power in the eyes of the Government at home and the Government of India, and they saw in this the possibility of getting the number of British soldiers in India reduced, being well aware that so long as there were a sufficient number of these in the country order could be maintained.

Their views were accepted by many high officials who enjoyed no Indian experience, and they had strong support from radicals of influence at home—if not, indeed, from the Cabinet. The politicians at home did not understand that the agitators were relatively an insignificant body who were quite unrepresentative of Indians in general, and that it was stupid to allow such people more influence in the councils of the Indian Empire than their numbers and their status in the country entitled them to. They, nevertheless, were accepted as the mouthpiece of “ All India,” and the policy of Government was ruled by their behests—especially so when these were emphasized by outrages on the part of extremists. The English people who supported them were people who had always been pacifists and who remained so up to the outbreak of the World War.

Quite apart from the question of affording assistance to the Empire in times of emergency outside of India, the Indian Army was barely sufficient to maintain internal peace and to protect the frontiers. It had been slightly increased by some new Indian units after the Penjdeh incident of 1885 ; but, subsequently

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1911

to that, Burmah had been annexed and Indian troops had been put in garrison at Singapore, Ceylon, North China and Hong-Kong, adding largely to its responsibilities. And this has always to be remembered. The Indian Army had at no time been considered capable, by itself, of resisting an attack from Russia. It had merely been considered strong enough to act as an advance guard till the entire military forces of the Empire came to its aid. The whole question had been gone into as recently as 1908, after the Anglo-Russian agreement. The army had then been somewhat reduced, and the Government of India had declared that it could not be further weakened. The internal condition of the country was assuredly no better in 1910-11 than it had been in 1908. I told Lord Hardinge about six weeks after his arrival—as I had already told Lord Minto—that I could save much waste of money by substituting efficient administrative methods for the very inefficient ones in force ; but he said that nothing would suffice which was not accompanied by a large reduction in Indian units. I concluded that he had these instructions from home.

We were, of course, at Calcutta all that cold season, and I left it as soon as I was allowed to do so, which was when the Legislative Council had been prorogued. The new Governor-General had issued a decree that no member of the Government of India was to be absent without his permission, and the Legal Member informed me that the reason for this was the need of ensuring a Government majority on the Council. But in fact it always had a large majority. Interfering with the Commander-in-Chief's tours in this manner is a serious blunder, seeing that he cannot properly perform his duties unless he keeps touch with local commanders and staffs and with the troops. There is, moreover, no reason why this Legislative Council should not meet at Simla in August, September and October, instead of down in the Plains in January, February and March, when members of the Executive Council ought to be seizing the opportunity to keep in touch with the people of the country by touring. When one realized that the Council as constituted neither represented nor knew the opinion of the country any better than the Government of India did, the absurdity of the whole arrangement was obvious.

It had been announced that Their Majesties the King-

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

Emperor and the Queen-Empress would visit India towards the close of the year, and that they would be present at a grand Durbar at Delhi. A large force of troops was to be concentrated there for the inspection of His Majesty. In view of this I took the opportunity of arranging beforehand to hold a camp of exercise near Delhi for the troops that would afterwards be present at the Durbar. But unfortunately the late rains proved to be deficient, and, as a consequence, forage was scarce ; so I had to give up the idea. For, to use up all the local forage, which it would have been necessary to do, would have inflicted hardships on the agriculturists.

One important question that had to be decided was what boons should be granted in honour of His Majesty's visit. This was the first time that a British ruler of India had come to the country, and Indian customs offered no precedent. When the Mogul Emperor appeared on such occasions, the great chiefs and high officials presented presents called *nazarena* ; the higher the rank of the donor the greater the value of these ; the Emperor made them presents in return, and also made valuable concessions to their troops. They also made large doles to the populace generally, throwing money among them for which they scrambled. If the Emperor was stingy he made large sums out of the function. On the occasion of such visits the Chiefs also presented large sums called *saswarna* for charities and religious purposes. But nowadays the *nazarena* is a formality ; the high official merely touches and then remits the coins presented. *Saswarna* has fallen into disuse on the occasion of visits of Chiefs and others to British officials, although there is usually a present made to their servants. I thought it a great pity that on the occasion of His Majesty's procession through Delhi and other towns, the Indian practice of throwing coins among the populace was abandoned. It could easily have been done by some officers on His Majesty's behalf, and it would have been much appreciated by the crowd and by others who love the old customs of their country.

No one was very specially considered however on this occasion except the agitators. In deference to them a large sum of money was given for education—I think the exact amount was Rs.1,000,000, but I am not quite sure—and other concessions were also made. It was quite forgotten that before

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1911

education could be carried on, one must have schoolmasters—but this was nothing. It was quite well known that the then Education Member of the Executive Council had money forced on him by the Finance Member which he could not spend advantageously. Nevertheless, spent it had to be, and to do so, grants in aid of education were made to certain missionaries, Germans included. This procedure did not please orthodox Indians, who looked on it as a breach of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. The educated among them also knew that the agitators would, when it suited them to do so, use the money for their seditious propaganda.

I recommended concessions to the Indian Army in the shape of pensions. That of the Indian officer was quite insufficient to enable him to keep body and soul together. But the Finance Member objected to any recurring charges being incurred, so I was told I could bring the matter up later. When I did,* it was refused consideration on the grounds that the Nicholson Committee would decide it, which it did not do. These pensions have since been increased, but quite inadequately. I made many other recommendations with equally bad success. However, the Indian Army got one great concession, which it valued highly—His Majesty opened the Victoria Cross to Indians. For the rest, the concession granted to the army was a fortnight's pay to all warrant officers and non-commissioned officers and men of the British Army and to all native ranks of the Indian.

The visit of His Majesty did incalculable good. It has left a most valuable impression, on the people, from which India is benefiting more than can be believed by those who do not know it. Some fears were entertained that the seditionist extremists might make an attempt on Their Majesties, but none who knew the country had much anxiety on that score. Still, it would have been criminal not to take all precautions against the possibility, for there are desperadoes and fanatics capable of anything and it would be folly to ignore their existence.

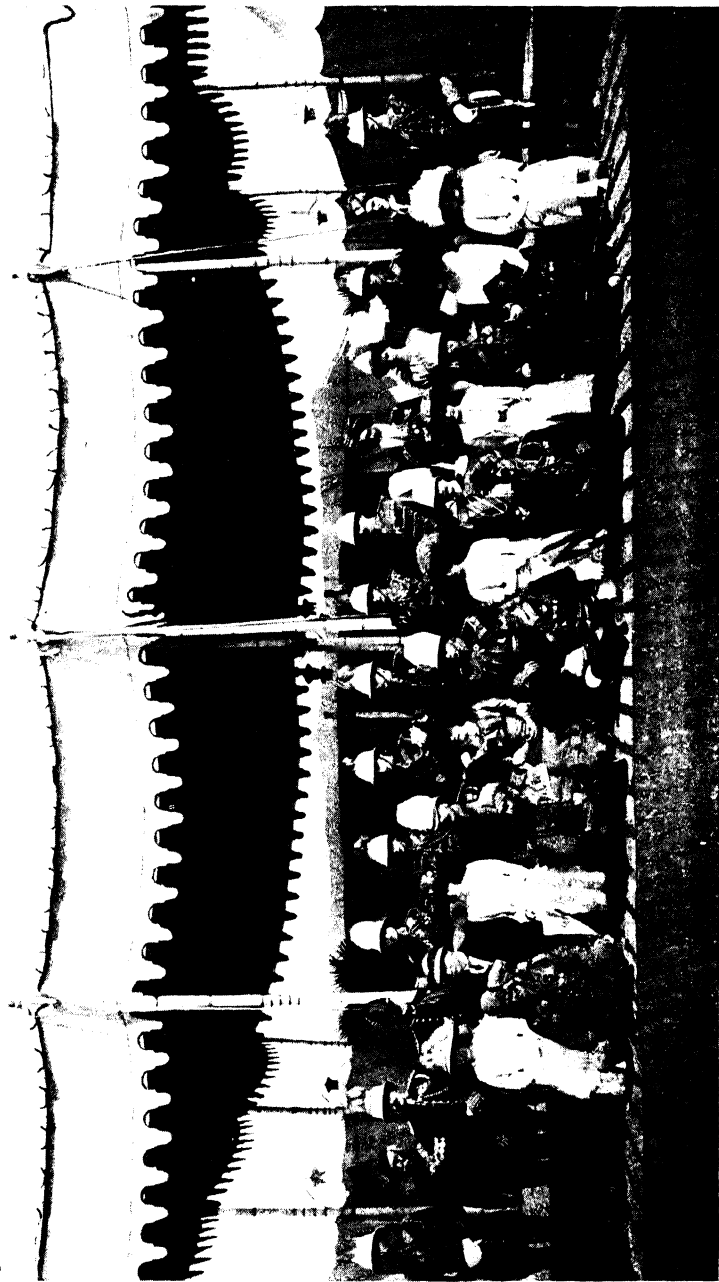
England has never sufficiently recognized the real link which binds India to her. It is not the Governor-General, nor Parliament, nor Legislative Councils, nor institutions of a like kind,

* This must have been in 1912. The Nicholson Committee held its inquiry during the cold season of 1912-13.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

of which the natives know little and for which they care less. It is not British citizenship, of which they have no idea. It is a sincere and devout veneration for the person of the Sovereign which is entertained by the natural leaders of the Indian peoples, viz., their chiefs, nobles and priests, and by all ranks of the Indian Army. When there has been opposition to Government on the part of these natural leaders, as has sometimes been the case, this has never for one moment detracted from their veneration for, and loyalty to, the Sovereign. And it is thus, and by these natural leaders alone, that India's loyalty has been maintained unimpaired among the great majority of the population.

To them a Viceroy is considered as only a passing State servant. Strange as it may appear to English people, his name and personality are only known to the few; and the same is the case as regards other high officials, who are only known in the provinces in which they have served. Both are mere abstractions to the villagers. But the King-Emperor, whose image and superscription are stamped on every coin, great and small, and whose praises are related by his soldiers and pensioners in every village, is—in the opinion of all except the very lowest and most ignorant, whose intellect is scarcely above that of a bullock—the real arbiter of their destinies. When a district magistrate, who is looked upon as the King-Emperor's representative by the villagers, is unpopular and does not gauge correctly their hopes or fears and does not protect them from the tyranny of the petty native officials with whom departmentalism has swamped them, the villagers believe that the King-Emperor does not know of their troubles or is too occupied with greater things to pay attention to their wants. And oppression must become very bad indeed to make them believe that His Majesty wilfully neglects them. This state of mind is not to be wondered at when their traditions regarding the hereditary principle, which are part of the traditions of all Indians, are considered, and when their great patience resulting from centuries of anarchical rule and oppression, the memory of which is ever with them, is borne in mind. From time immemorial they have been subject to hereditary Chiefs, good and bad, they love personal rule, and the history of India tells us that it is only by retaining the confidence of these natural leaders,



THE C-IN-C.'S GUESTS AT THE DURBAR.

[To face p. 277.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1911

the hereditary Chiefs and nobles, that the rule of any Indian King or Emperor has ever lasted.

The ceremony at Delhi was carried out with an impressive stateliness thoroughly in keeping with India's conception of what the dignity of its Sovereign required. Hundreds of thousands of people looked on in solemn silence while His Majesty, surrounded by his troops, announced his pleasure from the pavilion in which he stood; and in their silent way they blessed him. Thus it was that the Kings of old appeared at the *jharka*—a special pavilion built for the purpose—to exhibit themselves to the multitude and to receive their blessings. On the completion of this ceremony, and when the troops had marched off, the poor villagers, who had come long distances to see their Sovereign, rushed to the spot where he had stood to pray; for to their minds this was holy ground. It was an extraordinarily impressive sight, and one that showed the depth of the veneration with which these poor people regarded the great King and Emperor who had travelled from afar to show himself to them.

A force of some sixty thousand troops of all arms were assembled at Delhi in view of Their Majesties' visit, and a great review was held two days after the Durbar, at which all the units marched past and were minutely inspected by the King, who also visited the various camps. A detachment of pensioners, British and Indian, were present at the review, all of them old soldiers who had fought in many campaigns. His Majesty inspected these veterans personally and he spoke to nearly all the officers, which greatly rejoiced their hearts. He also presented colours to several battalions during his stay at Delhi.

The Governor-General and all the high officials had their special camps, at which they entertained notabilities and personal friends, of whom great numbers had come out from home to witness the great ceremonial and to see something of India. My wife and I had a number of friends staying with us for the show, which passed off extraordinarily well and which people from Europe who were unaccustomed to such spectacles greatly enjoyed.

Although nearly everything went well at the actual Durbar, an accusation was unfortunately brought against a very important Chief (and the incident was much noised abroad in the Press) of having saluted His Majesty disrespectfully. I was

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

there and did not notice it, although had he shown disrespect the matter might have escaped my notice. But I do not believe for a moment that any Chief would have intentionally behaved improperly when passing before the King-Emperor. There were differences of opinion amongst the Rajahs and the Chiefs as to what was the proper way to salute on an occasion such as this, and it has to be remembered that there is no universally accepted method of saluting in India. Different castes and different races do this in different ways. Among the Rajputs, for instance, the proper salute of a Chief to his Sovereign is to present the hilt of the sword to be touched, as a sign that the weapon is at his liege lord's service. In the old days, when a Rajput Chief had entered into rebellion against his Sovereign and had suffered defeat, the way he asked for pardon was by laying his sword at his liege lord's feet in token of complete surrender. I saw one Rajput noble salute His Majesty in the latter way, and he did so by way of showing his entire loyalty ; but others who saluted in accordance with ancient custom were much annoyed at his doing so, for they considered that his salute was likely to make onlookers—who did not know their ancient practices—consider them wanting in respect for their Sovereign, which was not the case.

There were many Chiefs of different races, each with his own customs, attending the Durbar, and each had a different way of saluting. It seemed to me that the Political Officers responsible for the presentations and for the ceremonial to be observed at them should have taken steps to see that salutes to His Majesty were correctly carried out, according to the respective customs of the various tribes or nations. Especially was this necessary on such a unique occasion as the first visit to India of its ruling British King-Emperor. Had they done this there could have been no misconception. Indian Chiefs are most punctilious regarding all matters of etiquette, and those nobles or high officials who are responsible for advising them on the subject, as well as their own tribesmen, strongly resent any departure from the accepted precedent. In every State throughout India the procedure that has been adopted in this matter by the previous Chiefs is recorded in the most minute detail, and this procedure is never departed from by their successors on analogous occasions in the smallest iota.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1911

I have known a case of a ruling Chief who, when he was asked by the Political Officer to carry out at a function a procedure which the Political Officer was laying down, flatly refused to do so. He gave as his reason for his attitude that the procedure proposed differed in some detail, which to an Englishman might well seem trivial, from that which had been adopted by his father in similar circumstances fifty years before. His contention was fair and reasonable, but it none the less drew down upon him the displeasure of the Government of India. Such cases ought not to occur. It should not be forgotten that the Chiefs are precluded from diverging from precedent in such matters, and that the effect of their doing so would be considered by their own people as loss of *izzat*. *Izzat* is ever in the minds of Indians of good caste.

When Their Majesties quitted Delhi they proceeded to Calcutta, where they won all hearts, as they did during the remainder of their tour in India, wherever they went. Were it only possible for them to visit their great Asiatic Dominion periodically, the good effect would be incalculable. They left Bombay on the 10th of January after a stay of six weeks in the country.

CHAPTER XXIV

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1912

A tour in the Punjab.—The defence question at Lahore.—The transfer of Government headquarters from Calcutta to Delhi.—The cost of the new capital, a misapplication of funds.—My report on the Army.—The Finance Member's demands for a reduction in the military budget.—Extraordinary proposal with regard to the cost of the Abor Expedition.—The report on the Army leads to the setting up of the Nicholson Committee.—Its composition.—It fails to agree on its report.—Objection taken to the report on the Army having been sent to the Chief of the General Staff in London to see.—Establishment of the Indian Army Temperance Association.—Its organization and objects.—Trouble in Afghanistan.—I object to moving any troops as a precautionary measure, for fear of misunderstanding being caused.—A petition from the 14th Sikhs and how it was dealt with.—Injustice that has been caused in similar cases by keeping the affair secret.—The slight effect of the Balkan War in India.—The Indian "Red Crescent Society" and its secret objects.—An awkward question arises owing to the Viceroy having contributed to its funds.—Expulsion of collectors of money for it from military cantonments authorized.—Indian suspicion at the attitude of the Government towards agitators.—The decision of the Governor-General to make his state entry into Delhi on an elephant.—The entry into Delhi.—Inadequate police arrangements.—Anarchists known to be on the prowl.—The order of procession.—Bomb thrown at the Governor-General.—Bad effect caused by the incident and by the fact that the criminals were not detected.—Absence of the Governor-General makes the working of the Executive Council proceed more smoothly.

AFTER the Delhi Durbar I visited in the first place the Malakand Pass, which overlooks the Swat Valley through which the road runs to Chitral, Mardan, which is the Headquarters of the Corps of Guides, and some other military stations in the north-western corner of the Punjab. I also visited Lahore, Agra, Cawnpore and Lucknow on the way to Calcutta.

Lahore is a city of much greater military importance than Delhi, as it is to-day a great railway centre and as there are extensive railway shops, the safety of which is of vital moment to the internal and the external defence of India. As circumstances might necessitate the removal of the troops forming the garrison, it is necessary that the railway establishments should be protected by suitable works, which would also afford a refuge to the large body of British residents and their families in case of

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

emergency. Lord Kitchener had taken the matter up, but he had never been able to get the sum necessary for erecting suitable defences. On my going into the matter, a discussion arose as to the proportion of this sum which the Railway Department and the Government of India respectively should contribute. The argument had not been concluded up to the time that I left India.

The Government of India Headquarters was to be transferred, as from the ensuing cold weather, from Calcutta to Delhi, so that this was to be my last stay at the former city. There have been many new Delhis—the natives say thirteen—and now the Government was erecting another; I wonder if some future Governor-General will make for himself a peacock throne. The proposal came from home this year that the city should, with some surrounding districts, be converted into a Chief Commissionership under the Government of India, which would thus be afforded a *pied-à-terre* on which to establish itself, without its sitting on the heads of local governments and thereby interfering injudiciously with their duties. The Government of India and the Secretary of State had flown off into the extravagant project of building a new city, after the fashion of Akbar when he built Futehpur Sikri—but with this difference: the eastern despot had plenty of money to do it with, while the western ones hadn't, or said they hadn't. They hadn't even enough to equip their army efficiently for the war, of the imminence of which there was already ample evidence. The political situation in Europe was growing worse. The German Chancellor had pronounced the disarmament problem to be insoluble. The Agadir incident had occurred, and had been followed by Mr. Lloyd George's warning to Germany. Tripoli, moreover, had been invaded by Italy. The seditious party in India was, furthermore, hard at work, and nothing was being done to stop its activities. And yet it was proposed to spend £5,000,000 on the new Delhi—experts on the subject all felt sure that it would cost not less than £14,000,000.

I hurried up to Simla to supervise the drawing-up of the Report on the condition of the army which I had been authorized to prepare, and thought that the Government of India would at least await its production before making any further demands for a reduction of military expenditure. But, scarcely had we

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

settled down, than the Finance Member—with the full support of the Governor-General—began bombarding me with demands for large reductions. These he reinforced by an official note in which he stated that, unless his demands were complied with, a large sum would be deducted arbitrarily by the India Office ; on my returning to England I inquired at the Military Department of the India Office as to what grounds the Finance Member had for making such a statement and was told that nothing was known about the matter. The Finance Member even demanded that the whole cost of the Abor Expedition, which had been carried out, most satisfactorily, at the request of the civil authorities in the previous autumn, should be paid for out of the sum allowed in the schedule budget of the current year.

I, of course, refused to entertain this last proposal. The annual budget never included the cost of wars or expeditions carried out by the Government of India, nor is the cost of wars and expeditions carried out by the army at home borne upon the normal Army Estimates. Had I indeed been willing to comply with this preposterous request, there was no money available from which I could have met it. All these demands were invariably based on the statement that the Government of India was in grave financial straits and that there would be a serious deficit in its annual budget.⁶⁰ But this invariably proved not to be the case.

The Report on the Army was finished on the 14th July. It was, of course, based on the policy which had been indicated by the Government of India, although it did not neglect to point out that there were possible dangers on the side of Turkey. It had to be reviewed in the Army Department from its political and its financial aspect, and I received it back from that department at the end of August, and then submitted it to the Government of India. The forwarding note pointed out that, while some saving was possible owing to waste of money on administration, there were many urgent requirements which could not safely be postponed—many of them have since become notorious owing to what happened in Mesopotamia. I stated that until these requirements should be made good the army could not be looked upon as efficient, and laid particular stress upon the fact that the failure to complete Lord Kitchener's scheme meant

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

a substantial reduction in the aid which India would be able to afford the Empire in other theatres of war in a time of grave crisis. I asked for an early decision. This was given in about three weeks' time, when the Governor-General in Council decided that the Secretary of State should be asked to appoint a Committee under the presidency of Field-Marshal Lord Nicholson to go into the whole question.

When this Committee was decided upon, I suggested that the financial representative on it should be a civilian official from the War Office Finance Branch, who had a short time before been lent to India to draw up a report on the Indian Ordnance Factories accounts and who had performed the task most efficiently. But the Finance Member would have none of him and insisted on his own man (who eventually became his successor), Sir W. Meyer, being chosen. There was, therefore, no independent financial advice available on the Committee, the two other members of which were Sir P. Lake and General Sir R. Scallon, an officer of long Indian experience. When in due course the Committee assembled they failed to come to an agreement. Lord Nicholson and Sir W. Mayer wrote what is referred to as a "Majority Report"; Generals Scallon and Lake wrote what is referred to as a "Minority Report," which agreed generally with my recommendations; this report has been kept confidential for some strange reason.

The Chief of the General Staff had sent a copy of the Report mentioned above to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff in London. When the Governor-General learnt this he insisted that the Chief of the General Staff should recall the report by telegram, if possible before the packet had been opened at the War Office. This was done and he was satisfied. The Chief of the General Staff had quite correctly assumed that I would have no objection to its being sent to the C.I.G.S. to see; it seemed to me most inadvisable to keep such information secret from the C.I.G.S., who is—or who ought to be—the adviser of the Cabinet on all important operations of war on which the Imperial forces might be engaged. It looked as if the Governor-General could not be very proud of his attitude with regard to the requirements of the Indian Army, otherwise there would have been no occasion to keep the Report concealed from an officer whose advice could not but have been beneficial. It

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

indeed seemed amazing that there should be so little confidence between two great Departments of State.

On my arrival at Simla this hot weather I had established an Indian Army Temperance Association on the lines of the British one, but it was to include the abstention from intoxicating drugs. Drink was doing much harm not only among the native troops but also in the villages from which soldiers were enlisted. An able retired Indian Army officer accepted the post of secretary, and he went round the villages to secure the services of other pensioned officers for local work and to form temperance associations all over the country. The Maharaja of Patiala became its Vice-President, and when I left India it was firmly established. The Indian officers wished it to be kept quite distinct from other temperance societies in the country, which were composed of people whom I did not know, for (as they very justly said) there were so many societies which openly had one object but which secretly had another object, that they could see no good in co-operating with such associations.

There was trouble in Afghanistan about this time, the Mongol tribes which inhabit mountainous territory to the south-east of Kabul causing anxiety to the Amir. The political authorities in India got some idea into their heads that the punitive expedition, which the Amir was organizing to deal with the disturbers of the peace, would result in driving these into the British protected region of the Kurram Valley, and that when they got there they would commit depredations. It was, therefore, proposed that troops should be moved to Thul, and that other military precautions should be taken on our frontier. I, on the other hand, felt confident that nothing done by the Afghans would drive the Mongols out of their own territory, which was singularly well adapted for fighting a defensive war in. Were we to move troops along the frontier near the scene of operations our action would be misunderstood, and the frontier tribesmen would persuade the Mongols—a very ignorant community—that the Indian Government intended to help them. The Amir would have seen in any movement of troops on our side nothing but an act of bad faith. I put my foot down firmly and declined to move a man unless special reference was made to the Secretary of State, and the Government of India accepted my view of the situation. The rebellion ended in a compromise, and the

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

Mongols committed no depredations in our territory beyond what the local militia were quite competent to deal with. The Amir, having heard that there was some talk of our moving troops, was most grateful to the Government of India for not having done so.

While we were at Simla this year a petition came to hand from the officers and men of the 14th Sikhs, which stated that before I had arrived in India they had been accused of being seditious, but had had no chance of putting in any defence, as they had suddenly been moved from the station that they were at in the Punjab to Loralai. The petition was most respectful, and it represented that a slur had been put upon a regiment which had always been loyal, as their fathers had been before them. They said that they had not petitioned before because no one in Simla knew them, but now that I, who did know them, was Commander-in-Chief they had asked the general-officer commanding their division to forward the petition to me. The general-officer in forwarding it said that he had personally inquired into the matter and that he was of opinion that the regiment had suffered an injustice. After full inquiry into the case I was satisfied that there had been no sedition. The incident which had given rise to the report had arisen from the stupid action of a British officer living in the lines, who had been misled by a paid spy bent on justifying his existence.

I replied to the petition in due course, saying that I had gone into the case and understood it, that the action taken against the regiment had been taken by mistake, but that God alone made no mistakes while we poor humans made many. By their own candour and honesty the fact that a mistake had been made was now apparent to all who had eyes to see, and the justice of the Government was going to be made equally manifest. The regiment was brought back to Peshawar, and the record of the case was removed. This was done publicly, the men were quite satisfied, and they have since then done splendid service for the Empire during the World War. I have known many cases of injustice caused by the secrecy of procedure usual under the circumstances. The authorities may imagine that things are kept concealed by marking letters and orders regarding them "secret" or "confidential," but that is a delusion; such cases become known very speedily throughout the Indian Army,

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

and, if the affair is hushed up and the offenders (or supposed offenders) are dealt with secretly, there is always sympathy for them. If they be dealt with openly nothing, other than satisfaction, is felt by native soldiers generally, for they do not hold with those who are false to their salt.

Just about this time the Balkan War broke out. All Musalman opinion in India worth having was that events in Europe would have no effect provided that the Government did not allow the few ill-disposed Musalman agitators and their newspapers to stir up trouble. But that was a big "if." There was a small section of professional politicians who had for some time been engaged on a Pan-Islamic crusade, who controlled several notoriously seditious newspapers, but who were personally men of no importance nor influence outside what they enjoyed with the Government of India. The leaders of the Musalman community in Northern India strongly resented the attitude adopted towards these seditionists by high officials, as owing to it the seditionists themselves were placed in a position to feel the pulse of their rulers and thus to know exactly how far they could go without running personal risk. In the Balkan War these mischief-makers saw an excellent opportunity for combining propaganda with profit.

They started an "India Red Crescent Society," ostensibly to collect funds for an ambulance corps to serve with the Turkish troops; but the real object in view was that some of them, by accompanying the ambulance corps, should get into touch with our enemies. They would then explain to the Sultan how all Indian Musalmans, represented by themselves, were only waiting for an opportunity to throw off the hated Feringi rule and to come under that of the Kaliph. No doubt the German and Austrian Consuls-General at Simla had a good deal to do with engineering and financing the project. Many people of doubtful loyalty collected subscriptions, while many loyal people, imagining the scheme to be purely charitable, contributed—very liberally in some cases. Musalmans of high rank, ecclesiastical and civil, told me exactly what was going on and begged me to get the leaders of the movement suppressed. Some of my informants had actually presided at meetings in connection with the project and had subscribed; when I asked these why they had so acted, they said that they were afraid of the influence

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

which the leaders of the movement possessed with the Government of India. Musalman Indian officers spoke to me about the danger and promised that if I would leave it to them they would deal sharply with any Red Crescent people who came near their men.

In due course I received a telegram from an official of the society, who was one of the most notorious seditious in India, asking that an order should be issued authorizing Musalman soldiers to subscribe to the fund, and asking that his collectors should be allowed to visit regiments in which there were Musalman soldiers. He justified his request by the statement that the Governor-General had subscribed five hundred rupees. This latter was rather a stumper, as one could hardly refuse to acknowledge the *bona-fides* of the society in face of the Viceroy's subscription. I therefore replied refusing the request as to issuing an order on the subject, on the grounds that Indian soldiers were permitted to subscribe to any legal object, and intimating that it lay with officers commanding regiments, and not with me, to withhold or to grant permission to individuals to enter the regimental lines. But I at the same time warned commanding officers confidentially of my views as to the objects of the Red Crescent Society, and desired them to communicate these confidentially to their officers British and Indian ; and I authorized the expulsion of any collectors found in cantonments. The society got no money out of Indian soldiers, who were much pleased at the action taken, because, as Indian officers said, some foolish fellow might have disgraced the regiment by subscribing and "one fly will make eighty pounds of sweet oil stink."

The people of India, owing to their having endured long ages of oppression in former days, are very suspicious of any Government action which is not readily intelligible. They see agitators whom they look upon as of low or of no caste rewarded with high positions under Government and with honours, and they see the crimes instigated by agitators going unpunished. They cannot understand whether Government loves or fears these people, who daily abuse it at meetings and in their Press. They therefore conclude that it is best for those who are in the confidence neither of the Government nor yet of the agitators to adopt a "facing both ways" attitude until

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

they see definitely how the cat will jump. There was a case of a seditious giving a lecture directed against Government at a great masjid, and many of the audience were men of education and of undoubted loyalty. The chief mullah had only quite recently come a long way to see me and to warn me as to what was going on, and yet he sat through the lecture. When I asked him why he had not contradicted some of the statements made, which he knew to be mischievously untruthful, he replied : " These people have influence with Government. Had I done so I should have been boycotted and subjected to petty persecution. I should have suffered much. Government would have given me no satisfaction as I could not have proved anything against anybody in a court of law. Had I attempted to do so I should have been covered with ridicule."

The Governor-General now announced his intention of entering Delhi in state on elephants in the ensuing cold weather. His Majesty the King had so recently carried out his state procession on horseback that it seemed doubtful to me whether the Governor-General doing so on an elephant would create a good impression. What rendered the project the more questionable was the fact that the Government of India did not possess any elephants and would, in consequence, be obliged to borrow them for the purpose from various chiefs in Northern India. That did not seem a dignified proceeding. But no one else than myself in the Government was of my opinion, and the elephant procession was arranged for.

In due course the Government went to Delhi, and the day for the state entry arrived. The elephant procession started about midday from the railway station, where the Governor-General had just come in by train from being on tour. The cortège was to proceed from thence through some of the main streets of the city to the Hall of Public Audience in the old palace of the Mogul Emperors. There the transfer of the new Delhi District from the Government of the Punjab to the Government of India was to be publicly announced. The roads along which the procession passed were lined with soldiers, British and Indian, extended at about four paces' interval, their duty being to prevent the crowd from leaving the pavement and encroaching on the road. The arrangements were made by the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, under whose orders the general-officer

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

commanding acted as far as the troops were concerned ; soldiers employed in this way are of no use for police duties other than keeping the crowd from encroaching.

It was quite obvious when the outrage later occurred that the police arrangements were totally inadequate, but I was informed that the Governor-General had issued distinct orders that no special steps were to be taken for his protection. The expediency of this seems open to question. A private individual can do as he likes, but in the case of a Viceroy the effect that an attack upon the King's representative would have all over India had to be considered, and the neglect to take precautions against an event so untoward seemed scarcely wise. Were such an outrage to go unpunished owing to its authors effecting their escape—as actually happened—it would stimulate the anarchists to fresh efforts and would greatly encourage the disaffected in general.

It was well known to all that anarchists were on the prowl, that they were well supplied with funds, and that only a short time previously a detachment of them had been under instruction in bomb-making at Zurich and other places abroad, who, on returning to India, had started working in Pondicherri, a French town. For days before the state entry there were rumours in the bazaars—those vague rumours which are wont to prevail in India when events are on the *tapis* and the grounds for which nobody can ascertain. Common sense seemed to indicate that the most thorough-going police precautions ought to have been taken, and that all suspicious characters ought to have been shadowed or put under lock and key. Accustomed to moving about in Indian crowds, I had the day before seen one or two individuals whom, had I been a policeman, I should have felt justified in arresting on the spot in view of their suspicious appearance. Those who know the people of India can generally judge pretty well by their dress, their manner of wearing their hair, their method of buttoning their clothes, their caste-marks, etc., to what provinces and religions they belong, and can form a fair idea of the general character of individuals. Certain native police officials are specialists at this.

The procession was led by the Governor-General's Staff, followed by the Governor-General and Lady Hardinge on an elephant. Then came my staff on an elephant, followed by

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

my wife and myself on another. After us followed the members of the Executive Council, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and Lady Dane, and a number of Punjab ruling Chiefs. All were mounted on elephants, which are slow-moving animals, and from which dismounting cannot be effected quickly, especially when one is in full dress, as all the officials were. The streets through which the procession passed were crowded, as were the houses on either side of them; every verandah and window was occupied, and swarms of people had gathered on flat roofs. I cannot imagine a better opportunity to be given to assassins.

All went well until the procession reached the Chandni-Chowk, the main street of Delhi. Then, from one of the houses a bomb was thrown which struck the Governor-General and killed the umbrella-bearer who stood behind him on the elephant. It also killed or wounded some people down in the street, while several soldiers lining it had narrow escapes. The procession was halted for half an hour while Lord Hardinge, badly injured, was taken off his elephant, was given first aid, was placed in an ambulance and was taken away; Lady Hardinge and his staff went with him. During this time we all sat still on our elephants, and, had the assassins not been in a hurry to escape, they might easily have wiped out the whole Government of India. Then the procession proceeded on its course and carried out the programme. It was not till after this was over that most of the people in Delhi became aware of what had occurred.

The incident had a very bad effect. It greatly encouraged the anarchist propaganda, especially so among Indians operating in other countries. Even in England it made many people who were unacquainted with the real state of affairs in India believe that disloyalty prevailed generally throughout the country, which was not the case. During the time that I have known India, disloyalty has been confined to a small class, and could have been suppressed at any time. There can be no doubt that this outrage had been engineered in Calcutta, although many persons in Delhi must have connived (for there are many foreigners, especially Bengalis, residing in the city), even if they took no active part. The general opinion amongst Indians was that the bomb had been manufactured by the anarchist society whose headquarters was known to be in



THE C.-IN-C. AND LADY CREAGH IN THE DELHI PROCESSION.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1912

Calcutta. Loyal people of the Punjab were greatly discouraged by the fact that no immediate punishment was inflicted in Delhi. They were of opinion that, at the least, punitive police should have been quartered in the city at once; for they were sure that there were persons in it who could have given information had they chosen to do so. A lakh of rupees—£3,333—was offered for information leading to the detection of the criminals; but none was forthcoming up to the date when I left India. It was, I believe, the largest sum that had been offered since the Mutiny for the detection of any crime.

The Governor-General was so badly injured that he was incapacitated for work for a considerable time. On previous occasions of a vacancy in the office of Viceroy, this had been filled by the senior Governor; but that precedent was not followed in this case. Former vacancies had been permanent, but this one was only temporary. It was decided by the Secretary of State that the Council should carry on its work as usual, and each member thus came to be in complete charge of his own department. The Council met weekly, and I noticed that at these meetings opinions were expressed very freely. The senior ordinary member presided, and all communications from the Secretary of State were received by him and were passed on to the respective departments. India was, of course, ruled by telegraph by the Secretary of State during this period, but it really did not matter, because he had been doing the same before. The one thing that struck me was how much more smoothly everything worked, and how much more quickly business was done. I came to the conclusion that it would be much better if the Governor-General were really a Viceroy—that is, were he to be in the position of a constitutional King, with a member of Government as President of the Executive Council or Prime Minister, and were each member of that Council to be really in charge of his department in the same way as a Cabinet Minister is at home. Work would then be much more satisfactorily done.

CHAPTER XXV

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF IN INDIA, 1913-14

Camp of exercise at Panipat.—Inadequacy of training grant.—Visit of an Austrian officer.—His sudden departure and its reason.—A visit to Rajputana.—Misconduct of petty officials in the irrigation department.—A complaint by ex-soldiers with regard to forced labour.—Anxiety with regard to condition of the army.—Attitude of the Government.—Lord Nicholson's Committee.—My duties with regard to its reports.—Its two reports.—A put-up job.—A commander-in-chief with proper powers only appointed after the early disasters of the World War.—The army kept inefficient owing to parsimony.—The advisers of the Governor-General not the right people.—Erratic methods consequently adopted in dealing with insignificant agitators.—Disgust of the loyal and the well-behaved.—A visit to Kashmir.—Hospitality of the Maharaja and how I made his acquaintance.—Karachi.—A trip down the west coast.—Cochin.—Ratnagherry.—A visit to ex-King Thebaw.—The procession to his residence.—An estimate of him.—A daughter of his commits a *faux pas*.—A tale of Lord Dufferin.—Back to Delhi.—A breeze with the Mohmands.—A successful punitive expedition.—My report on Lord Nicholson's Committee.—Resignation of appointment.—Numbers of Indians of all ranks and races come to bid me good-bye.—The views expressed by one of the Chiefs who came.—I am prevented from expressing my dissent officially from the proposal to set up an Executive Council in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.—Farewell to India.

IN the winter of 1912-13 I held a camp of exercise for two divisions near the historic battle-ground of Panipat. Only £9,000 was allowed me for the training of the army in India, a sum that was totally inadequate. Training conditions no doubt differ to a considerable extent in England from those in India ; but the grant for regular troops on the Home Establishment—numbering less than three-fifths of those in India—was nine times as great as what was allowed me. In spite of frequent representations for an increase in the grant, the Government of India was unable to appreciate the necessity for training troops in combination. The result of their refusal was that the army in India entered upon the World War without that higher training which it should have undergone in peace.

This camp of exercise was attended by an Austrian officer, who was permitted to do so by the Government, presumably

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

on orders from home. The War Office apparently knew nothing of him, for they subsequently wrote that as the Austrian Government did not allow our officers to attend their manœuvres my action in permitting him to attend mine had been inconvenient. It did not look as if there was much touch between the Foreign office and the War Office, for the Secretary of State for India presumably instructed the Government of India at the request of the Foreign Office. The officer arrived in due course and expressed his desire to remain a fortnight, but after he had been with me only four days he left in a great hurry. In bidding good-bye, he said that he was sorry to leave so suddenly but that war was going to take place with Russia in the Spring, and he had been offered an important appointment in the field army, which would be kept open for him if he left Karachi by the next Austrian-Lloyd steamer. This he had just time to catch. "We are going to get in first blow at the Russians this time," he added, "and so there must be no delay in our mobilization arrangements. That is the reason I have to bolt off in such a hurry."

I afterwards went to Rajputana and Central India, visited many Chiefs in both provinces, and inspected all the military stations in them. I also visited the canal colony of Lyalpur, where there are many military colonists. All complained bitterly of the tyranny of the petty officials of the Irrigation Department, who, they said, refused the proper allowance of water unless heavily bribed. On my telling them that the proper person to address was the Deputy Commissioner, they said that they had already done so. He told me that this was so, but that the Irrigation Department was not under him; he had, however, forwarded the complaints to its head. He said that there was much oppression, and he asked me to take up the matter as a member of the Executive Council. This I did, and the head of the department concerned promised to deal with it and, I have no doubt, did so, but on its long journey through the official channel the thing was apparently lost somewhere. An Indian soldier told me subsequently in London that no action had been taken to stop the evil practices.

About the same time I received a petition from the Indian officers of the 29th Garhwal Rifles to the effect that men on leave, on pension, or in the reserve were impressed for forced labour. They said that by Government order they were exempted from

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

such work, which, as Rajputs, was against their *izzat*. It is stated on every soldier's discharge certificate that he is exempted from forced labour; but, when I made representations to the Government of India, they declined to take the matter up and recommended me to address the Lieutenant-Governor of the province. But I got no satisfaction. He replied, quoting several acts, that the forced labour which the men were exempted from was not the forced labour that they were being compelled to do. It seemed very unjust, in view of the certificate. Our Government has stopped forced labour in Egypt and in Kashmir, and it ought not to be permitted in British territory in any case. On returning home I brought the matter privately to the notice of an official at the India Office, for it is not right that ex-soldiers should suffer such indignities—or indeed that any of His Majesty's subjects should.

After receiving the information from the Austrian officer when he was leaving, my anxiety concerning the state of the army was increased. It was quite clear that before very long it would have other work to perform than that of "frontier wars or possibly sending a brigade to China," which the former Governor-General had in 1911 decided was its only duty apart from that of keeping internal peace. The condition of Persia also was becoming worse, and many thought that the Swedish officers employed in that country with the consent of the British Government were pro-German and were aiding German intrigues. Nor were the Germans inactive in India itself; their intrigues were well known to the Government of India, which had no excuse for allowing them to continue, the more so as it did not believe India to be loyal. According to the Government's own account, the country was in a state of vehement excitement over the treatment of Indians in South Africa. But one never could tell whom the Government of India consisted of. Sometimes it was the Governor-General in Council, at other times it was the Governor-General and perhaps a single Member of the Executive Council or an "influential Member" of the Legislative Council.

It was important to see the Army in India (Lord Nicholson's) Committee through, as reflections might be made on my administration which I should have no opportunity of rebutting. There had been rumours to the effect that the terms of reference of the Committee which had been made public had been supplemented

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

by private instructions inculcating special regard to economy. I hoped, however, for the best, especially as two of the members knew the Indian Army well and as these were likely to exert a good influence in respect to any proposals prejudicial to military efficiency that might be made. It was understood that the Committee would complete its labours and submit its report by the 15th of March, and it had then to come to me as Army Member of the Executive Council. My duty would be to forward it to the Governor-General for submission to the Secretary of State. I knew that the evidence of officers of all ranks had been taken, and that I and my staff would have to wade through an enormous quantity of literature; and I was painfully aware that nothing would be done to remedy the parlous state of the army until the Secretary of State had given his decision on the Committee's report. There must therefore be no delay on my part.

Immediately the sittings of the Legislative Council were ended at Delhi I started for Simla, arriving there at the end of March, and found that although the "Majority Report"—that by Lord Nicholson and Sir W. Meyer—was ready, the "Minority Report"—that of the two dissentient members, Sir P. Lake and Sir R. Scallon—was not. I did not get the latter till the 1st of May. There thus were two reports and several volumes of evidence, and it took a long time to digest them with the assistance of my staff, during which we might have been better employed. We were merely going over the old threadbare arguments and financial bickerings which had taken up so much of our time for the last four years. The object of all this obstruction, one felt quite sure, was to avoid considering the question of military efficiency fairly while pretending to do so, to save military expenditure at the risk of sacrificing the country's safety, and in the event of calamity to be able to throw the blame upon the soldiers. It had long been customary for one political party to take military risks in India, in the hope that they themselves would get *kudos* for curtailing expenditure and that if misfortune should result the blame for it would fall upon the rival party—unless by a combination of both it could be put upon the military. Everything about the Committee Reports was "secret," so that I can say no more upon the subject except that its proposals were well known to all at Simla. Everybody now remembers

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

the disasters which subsequently occurred, owing to the delay in remedying long existing defects in the military organization. So long as these underground methods are practised by a servile bureaucracy, whether military or civil, nothing else is to be expected.

Fortunately a Commander-in-Chief* was in due course appointed, who was free from the trammels of a life spent at Simla and who was in touch with the home methods of military administration. He was amply supplied with funds, for public opinion at home, which had never before turned its attention to India, insisted that this should be so. Otherwise neither he nor anybody else could have done anything—as is amply proved by the fact that even the personality of Lord Kitchener and the weight that he carried at home could not prevail against financial obstruction in India. I feel sure that the present Commander-in-Chief there will not be found amongst those who abuse either Lord Kitchener's system or the General Staff system which I organized. I am told that the deadly interference of the Finance Department has ceased and the military activities of its head have been subdued ; but on the return of peace the old system will again be resumed, if steps are not taken to prevent it. Bad as have been the calamities resulting from unpreparedness during this war, a similar unpreparedness in the next will have infinitely worse results, for campaigns of the future will necessitate even greater armies than those of to-day and, as war becomes more mechanical, armies will become more costly.

Even had there been no European War in prospect, I can see no justification for the Government's refusal to keep the army, which it maintained, efficient for all possible duties. It was not even properly prepared for an encounter with semi-organized Asiatic enemies. It was considered necessary to reduce military expenditure—I presume under orders from home—so as to satisfy the insignificant seditious clique in India and their supporters in the House of Commons, who were ever clamouring for the reduction of the army and demanding that the money saved should be devoted to other objects which would have put most of it into their own pockets. Outside this clique there was no disloyalty in the country. The people no doubt had, and have,

* General Sir C. C. Monro, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., G.C.S.I. This appears to have been written about 1918.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

many just grievances; but they are patient and not easily excited, and they trusted to the honesty and justice of their rulers to redress these grievances in due course. Even had they been excited, a kind word of appeal to their hearts from their ruler would have calmed them, for they are wonderfully sensitive and they respond magnetically to kind words, and also to rebuffs. They unfortunately got more of the latter than they did of the former, because officials in high places had little imagination and possessed no knowledge of the psychology of the races under their sway.

The Governor-General and the Secretary of State were indebted to "influential persons in the Legislative Council" (the identity of some of whom could only be guessed) for their views as to what the masses of India thought and what the result of neglect of their views would be. Knowing the Members of the Legislative Council, both nominated and elected, and knowing the methods under which elections were carried out and nominations were made, I had no respect for the opinions of most of them. Yet it was the advice of such people that frequently guided the internal policy of the Government of India during the time that I had been a member of it under the Viceroyalties of Lord Minto and Lord Hardinge. This may account for the many unseemly panics that occurred and for the erratic methods adopted in dealing with them.

Sometimes an insignificant individual would be "run in" and deported, to be shortly afterwards released in obedience to violent agitation, and brought back to his native town in a first-class railway carriage—a class he had probably never before travelled in—at Government expense. On his arrival he received an ovation from the tag-rag and bobtail, organized for the purpose, at which some "babus" (as the villagers in the north termed such people) spouted more sedition and took the returned deportee to their fat bosoms as a "co-babu." Then, if not elected to a Legislative Council, local or imperial, he usually got an appointment on some municipality under babu control, in which pay might be small but perquisites were large. In any case he remained ever afterwards in the small circle in which he moved a politician of renown.

The neighbouring villagers and sober-minded citizens cursed, not the Government, but the babu; for they believed that in

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

far-away England some evil influence which they did not understand was exercised in the babu's favour. "If not," they argued, "how could such a mean person flout the Sirkar?"* They knew that if one of themselves had broken the law in the way that the babu had, he would have been run in by the police and would probably have been awarded hard labour, which he would have had to work out and at the expiration of which he would have returned to his home, dishonoured. They knew, moreover, that the babu would by some means or other get his compensation at their expense. Still their loyalty was in no way affected, except in that their natural leaders thought that they were not wanted, kept more to themselves, and only occasionally visited British officials and were very reticent when they did so. Those of the soldier classes, who are more intelligent than the others, called the Government the "Babu-Raj," and they put down all their grievances to the babu.

I left Simla on my tour about the middle of September and proceeded to Kashmir. The Maharaja had frequently asked me to visit him and to shoot in his country. I had met him accidentally some years previously while in command of the Rawal Pindi Division. When attending a race-meeting, I noticed an Indian gentleman in the grand stand enclosure, standing among a crowd of English people whom he did not know. I went up to him, and asked him to walk round with me and to come into the grand stand and sit down to see the next race run. After we had been talking some time he asked me if I knew who he was, and on my saying that I did not, he told me that he was Sir Pertab Singh, the Maharaja of Kashmir. On my telling him who I was, he said: "We have talked long together and made friends, not officially but privately. You are my *private* friend. I like private better than official friends." He always afterwards called me his private friend, laying special stress upon the "private." On our arriving at Srinagar I went to call on him, and he was most kind. He told me that he had made all arrangements for us to stay as his guests, with leave for me to shoot anywhere and what I liked. Our party enjoyed our time greatly and had excellent sport. I said good-bye to His Highness with the greatest regret when leaving, after three weeks' stay, on my way to Karachi.

* Government.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

After halting there for a few days I embarked on a Royal Indian Marine ship to visit the principal towns on the west coast between Karachi and Cochin in the extreme south of India, and to inspect the garrisons, where there were any. We put in at nearly all the ports, but it would take too long to describe them all, so I will only mention two, Cochin and Ratnagherry. The Cochin region yields immense quantities of cocoa-nut oil, coir and other products, such as tea, copra, areca-nut, ginger, etc., and much of this trade has to be carried over a long mileage of railway merely to undergo a longer sea voyage to England. This is because a bar blocks the entrance to Cochin's natural harbour. The local port engineer showed me plans and estimates for dredging a channel, and the local merchants asked me to induce Government to take action. Vasco da Gama established a factory at the place in 1502, and when the Dutch captured it in 1663 they built quays and warehouses and carried on a busy trade—the quays and warehouses remain to-day. The vast commercial possibilities of the port have greatly increased with the opening of the Suez Canal. I reported what I had learnt to the department of the Government concerned, but no action appears to have been taken.

Ratnagherry is the chief town of a district which is the home of the best Indian lascars; the crew of the Indian Marine ship I was travelling on came from here. They told me that they had been away from home for a long time, and they conveyed a broad hint that a visit to their native place would be agreeable. The captain liked the idea when it was suggested to him, and he promised to give as many of his men leave as possible; the lascars were delighted at the prospect, even more at their hint having been taken than at the chance of visiting their homes.

Ex-King Thebaw was living at Ratnagherry as a state prisoner, and I thought that it would be interesting to pay him a visit, the Political Officer in charge of him saying that there would be no objection. So I sent a message to His ex-Majesty asking if he would be pleased to give me an audience as I wished to pay him my respects. He was delighted at this way of putting it and consented at once, promising to send carriages for myself and staff. Next day he sent several bullock-carriages, in which we were conveyed to his abode some two miles away. The bullocks were somewhat obstreperous and required much persuasion

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

in the way of tail-twisting and prodding with sharp sticks. Whenever they passed the gate of a compound—and these were numerous along the road—they made a dash for it, frequently nearly upsetting us. However, we eventually arrived at the ex-King's residence, a fine mansion especially built for him. At the gate was assembled a band of musicians armed with every sort of Oriental ear-tearing instrument that had ever been invented, and they are many and vile.

When my bullocks saw the compound they rushed for it, and those drawing my staff did the same. A general stampede took place as to which would get there first. The drivers shrieked the most awful execrations at their bullocks and at their bullock relations, male and female. This noise was bad enough, but it became terrible when we had got through the gate, for the band thereupon struck up what was supposed to be "God save the King," but what was more like the caterwauling of thousands of cats engaged on a midnight revel. Amidst all this noise and confusion, the drivers, after successfully negotiating the gate, made a bee-line for His ex-Majesty's door, rushing over flower-beds and water-channels like a kind of Jorrocks' hunt. However, we reached our destination safely and were admitted to the royal presence.

Thebaw struck one as an amiable old gentleman of gentle manners. Judging from his demeanour and from his conversation one never would have believed him to have been a villainous tyrant and a wholesale murderer. I treated him with the greatest respect and as though he could have cut off my head, as he had done with so many of his relations and subjects. He was, after all, brought up that way and would probably in other surroundings have been not a bad king. He was extremely grateful for the deference shown him, to which he was apparently not accustomed at the hands of some of his visitors, and he was most polite to me; he said that he had no wish to return to his native country. It was unfortunate that I could not speak to him except through an interpreter, as otherwise he would have been most interesting to study.

I gathered from one of the followers, who knew Urdu, that a daughter of the ex-King had quite recently had an affair with a low-class Indian servant, resulting in an increase to the royal family. The follower, when expressing the views with

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

regard to the incident that were held by Thebaw and his entourage, said: "When the princess became of marriageable age the King decided to get her a Burmese husband, but he had not the spare cash to enable him to do so. Although his allowance is sufficient to cover his own expenses, he has nothing left over for such a purpose. He asked the Government to make him a special grant, and the matter is still under consideration; but in the meantime the princess was every day becoming of a more marriageable age. What could she do?" Neither the King nor his entourage thought that the young lady had done anything very dreadful.

Burma was annexed during the viceroyalty of the late Lord Dufferin in 1885, since which event Thebaw had been living at Ratnagherry, the climate of which is not unlike that of his former capital, Mandalay. Lord Dufferin was a man of most courtly manners and a great judge of human nature—as I once saw evidenced at a garden party at Government House during his Governor-Generalship. He made a practice of speaking to nearly all his guests and of artfully making them believe that he was personally acquainted with them. I was standing behind him when a lady, of a certain age and much over-dressed, was presented. He greeted her almost affectionately, told her he scarcely recognized her she was looking so young, and declared that she must have recently been in Paris as was proved by her wearing such a beautiful gown. He said a lot more nice things, and the lady was as pleased as Punch at the charming remarks of the great man. After she was passed on, I was astonished to see him turn round to Lord William Beresford, his A.D.C., and ask, "Who the devil is that?"

From Ratnagherry I went to Bombay and inspected the troops, harbour-defences and military establishments there, returning to Delhi just before the Christmas holidays began. I arranged for one or two small camps of instruction to be held in January, but had not funds at disposal to permit of establishing such camps on a scale that would have been of any use in giving general-officers practice in handling their commands. Without such practice being carried out in time of peace, combined action is bound to be faulty in time of war. Moreover, owing to being detained in Delhi by the Legislative Council, I could not attend any of the camps myself.

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

One section of the Mohmand tribe was giving trouble on the frontier at this time, and the civil authorities wishing that military operations should be undertaken against it, I was given a free hand and managed the affair in my own way. Once a rumour gets about that an expedition is likely in cases like this, all the contractors at once set themselves to make as much as they can out of the affair by inciting the tribesmen to make as much trouble as possible. In the meantime, the friends and spies of the clan in every village inside our territory give the tribesmen details of every movement of our troops, with the result that the former are enabled to remove their families and goods, including cattle and sheep, from the threatened locality. The first thing to make sure of, therefore, was secrecy. Nothing was said about the coming operations except to one or two high local officials who had to be consulted, and these were requested to keep our designs to themselves and particularly to conceal them from the petty native officials.

A small concentration of force was carried out about twenty miles from the border. I had the neighbouring villages in British territory surrounded by cavalry, which precluded all communication and which bottled up spies and inciters to mischief. The punitive force then made a rapid night march against the tribesmen, to whom its composition and strength were quite unknown. It completely surprised them, upon which they surrendered and complied with all the orders of the civil authorities. The small operation began on a Saturday evening, and by the following Tuesday morning the troops engaged were back in British territory and the difficulty was settled. Had similar methods of secrecy and consequent surprise been adopted on many previous occasions, military operations would have been equally short and effective and would not have developed into expeditions on a large scale involving much loss of life and money.

My time in India was now drawing to a close. I had completed my report on the proceedings of the Army in India (Lord Nicholson's) Committee of 1912-13, and sent it to the Governor-General on the 30th January, 1914. There had been nearly two years taken up in deciding questions, the answers to which were known to everybody except the Governor-General and the Secretary of State, and during that time the unsatisfactory condition of the army had remained unremedied. Had the



THE C-IN-C. AND HIS PERSONAL STAFF.

Commander-in-Chief in India, 1913-14

Government, in order to reduce military expenditure, reduced the small army in India, I could have understood it although I could not have agreed with it, for it was already too weak to perform the duties assigned to it. But to reduce military expenditure by keeping the existing army inefficient could under no circumstances be justified.

I had some months previously sent in the resignation of my appointment as from the 7th of March, and it had been accepted by the Secretary of State. When my Indian friends learnt that this was to be my last stay at Delhi many of them from the northern provinces, and not a few from the Dekkan and other parts, came to see me and to wish me good-bye. They included people of all ranks and races—military pensioners, villagers, shikaris, bards, priests, gentlemen, nobles and chiefs, most of whom came from long distances and many of whom I had not seen for years. I was kept pretty well occupied in seeing them all—and bidding farewell to old friends is not exhilarating—so that my last days in India were somewhat depressing.

One great chief when saying good-bye expressed his regret at my departure as follows: "We all know," said he, "that you are one of the few white men of high rank now left in India who know our ancient customs and religions and who are old-fashioned enough to respect them. We sadly regret your leaving us. During long years you have known us and most of our fathers before us, and your door has ever been open to us when we have come to visit you." He was a wise and far-seeing chief who, although he knew no English, was well educated. He had long been my friend and we had often talked over Indian affairs, he always maintaining that the institutions of England were totally unsuited for wholesale transference to his own country. He saw quite clearly that many of them might advantageously be grafted on to those existing in certain parts of India, but that in doing so due respect must be paid to ancient civilizations and customs. He foresaw that the tendency to introduce foreign innovations too rapidly would cause unrest, and he said that what had already been effected in this direction had dealt out injustice and individual hardship to many, because those Indians on whom the Government mainly relied for advice were not upright in their conduct. These advisers were, he said, generally men of tottering fortunes, who merely used professed love of

General Sir O'Moore Creagh

progress as a cloak for personal ambition, in pursuit of which they were regardless as to whether or not they excited the ignorant and caused tumult and disaffection amongst them. I think that he summed up the situation correctly.

A proposal for an Executive Council to be set up for the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh had been made, and it had been agreed to by a minority of the Executive Council. I had recorded my dissent and wished before leaving the country to sign the dispatch on the subject and so put my opinion before the Secretary of State. I tried to get the report prepared and printed, but did not succeed. What caused the delay I do not know, but there was no excuse for it. The dispatch was not ready till after my departure, and then my successor, General Sir B. Duff, concurred in the proposal, so that it went home to the Secretary of State with a majority in its favour.

When the day of our departure from Delhi for home arrived, Lord and Lady Hardinge came to pay us a farewell visit in the forenoon. They, the members of the Executive and Legislative Councils, a great number of officers, and a crowd of natives of all classes were present at the railway station to see us off, and we found parting from so many friends a trying experience. Brigadier-General W. E. Peyton, the Military Secretary, accompanied us on our journey to England. We stayed for a day or two at Bombay, and I there met Sir B. Duff and was able to have a long talk with him. When we at last sailed, it was on a date almost exactly forty-five years from the day when I had first set foot on Indian soil as an ensign of the 95th, and the farewell Guard of Honour on the quay was found by the 2nd Battalion of the Sherwood Foresters—the old 95th.

